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ABSTRACT

This study reviews the research on community schools and reports on evaluations of community schools initiatives across the United States. It explains that community schools are important solutions in improving student learning. It uses research and evaluation data, as well as local school experiences, to illustrate why community schools are important to the education and development of all students. Five chapters address: (1) "The Community School Advantage" (e.g., building social capital, providing learning opportunities that develop academic and non-academic skills, and leading an effective school environment); (2) "The Conditions for Schooling" (e.g., students are motivated and engaged in learning, both in school and in community settings, and there is mutual respect and effective collaboration among parents, families, and school staff); (3) "The Impact of Community Schools: A Review of Current Evaluation Findings" (e.g., the impact of community schools in youth, families, schools, and communities); (4) "From Research to Practice" (e.g., connected learning experiences and community partnerships); and (5) "An Action Agenda" (e.g., a motivating vision and strategic organization and financing). Five appendices present: community school profiles and narrative overviews; community school evaluations (description, design, and findings); additional resources; national and local community school networks; and coalition for community school partners. Also appended is an executive summary. (Contains approximately 180 references.) (SM)

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MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

Research and Practice in Community Schools

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ABOUT THE COALITION FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

An alliance of more than 160 national, state and local organizations, the Coalition represents community development and community building; education; family support and human services; government; health and mental health services; policy, training and advocacy; philanthropy; and school facilities planning and youth development organizations, as well as local, state and national networks of community schools.

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ORDERING INFORMATION

Free copies of the report's executive summary are available. Bulk orders are available at a reduced rate. The full report and additional resource materials are available to download free of charge at www.communityschools.org. Single copies of this report are available for $12 prepaid. $2 for shipping and handling will be added if billing is requested. All orders must be received in writing by fax, e-mail or mail. Contact:

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MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

Research and Practice in Community Schools

MARTIN J. BLANK
ATELIA MELAVILLE
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COALITION FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

EDITING AND DESIGN BY KSA-PLUS COMMUNICATIONS

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Coalition for Community Schools

Mission Statement

The Coalition's mission is to mobilize the assets of schools, families and communities to create a united movement for community schools. Community schools strengthen schools, families and communities to improve student learning. (See Appendix E for a full list of partner organizations.)

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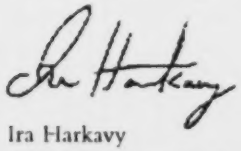
Preface

At a time when education is receiving so much national attention, the Coalition for Community Schools is pleased to share the findings of *Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community Schools*. *Making the Difference* demonstrates that community schools are an important solution to the task at hand — improving student learning. While schools are facing immense pressure to increase achievement levels on their own, we believe it is time to recognize the power that communities, working with educators in community schools, bring to the challenge of educating all of our young people to high standards.

Making the Difference renews the historic vision of our schools as centers of our communities — places where everyone in a community works in partnership to educate children. People across the country who are working hard to create community schools understand that bringing school and community assets together will help young people succeed in school and life, and will make their families and communities stronger. This report reflects the work of thousands of community schools nationwide.

To our knowledge, this is the first time that research from multiple fields and disciplines has been organized, together with community schools research, to make a strong case for community schools. *Making the Difference* uses research and evaluation data, along with local school experiences and common sense to illustrate why community schools are so important to the education and development of all our children.

We encourage you to use this report to build partnerships and strengthen support for creating and sustaining community schools.



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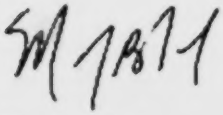

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Acknowledgments

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Numerous people working in community schools provided us with vast amounts of information and important insights. The principals, teachers, community school coordinators and partners from the schools and communities profiled in this report deserve particular recognition (see Appendix A). We also would like to express our appreciation to the following former principals and community school coordinators who shared their valuable expertise with us: Terrie Lewis, East Elementary School CIS site director; Steven Edwards, East Hartford High School principal; Paul Hamann, Families on Track executive director; Lisa Clark, Howe Family Resource Center executive director; Fred Kravarik, Marquette Elementary School principal; Nancy Sturgeon, North Middle School community school coordinator; Ron Schumacker, North Middle School assistant principal for student support; and James E. Short, St. Paul High School principal.

Thanks go also to other friends who took the time and energy to provide us with their expert feedback on this report: Larry Decker, Florida Atlantic University; Joyce Epstein, Center on School and Community Partnership, Johns Hopkins University; Nedra Feeley, Building Community Partnerships; Ronald Ferguson and Sarah McCann, Harvard University; Jean Grossman, Public/Private Ventures; Paul Heckman, University of Washington; Mike Kirst, Stanford University; Milbrey McLaughlin, Stanford University; Steve Parson, Virginia Tech; Lisbeth Schorr, Boundaries Task Force of the Harvard Project on Schooling and Children; Mike Timpane, Rand Corporation; and Joan Wynn, Chapin Hall Center for Children.

The Coalition for Community Schools appreciates the sustained support from our funders that has been crucial throughout the life of our work: The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund and the Carnegie Corporation. The KnowledgeWorks Foundation, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Polk Bros. Fund provided special support for the publication of *Making the Difference*.

The Coalition also is grateful for the support of Elizabeth Hale, president of the Institute for Educational Leadership, and the commitment of the IEL staff and networks to our work.

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About This Report: Making the Case for Community Schools

"A community school is not just another program being imposed on a school. It embodies a way of thinking and acting that recognizes the historic central role of schools in our communities — and the power of working together for a common good. Educating our children, yes, but also strengthening our families and communities so that, in turn, they can help make our schools even stronger and our children even more successful."

— Ira Harkavy and Martin J. Blank
"A Vision of Learning That Goes Beyond Testing"
Education Week, April 17, 2002

Universal education is a valued tradition in America, and with good reason — a democracy rises and falls on the education of its children. Universal, however, does not necessarily mean equal or even adequate. In recent decades, educators, policymakers and others have come to understand that the real question is not how to provide all children with schooling, but how to create the conditions that enable every child to succeed.

Today's federal mandate, set forth in the No Child Left Behind Act, gives new urgency to this question — just as shrinking budgets and increasing demands for accountability challenge schools to do more with less. Across our nation, schools and communities have been examining their practices and resources to discover what they can do differently so that every student learns at high standards.

In these pages, the Coalition for Community Schools, an alliance of more than 160 national, state and local organizations, makes the case that community schools offer a practical and effective strategy for educating all children to their full potential. *Making the Difference* outlines the advantages of community schools and the conditions for learning that these advantages create. It reviews the research on which these conditions are based and illustrates the extent to which community schools make a difference to students, schools, families and communities.

The crux of our evidence is presented in Chapter 3. There we report on evaluations of 20 community school initiatives across the United States that demonstrate notable improvements in four areas:

- **Student learning:** Community school students show significant and widely evident gains in academic achievement and in essential areas of nonacademic development.
- **Family engagement:** Families of community school students show increased stability, communication with teachers and school involvement. Parents demonstrate a greater sense of responsibility for their children's learning success.
- **School effectiveness:** Community schools enjoy stronger parent-teacher relationships, increased teacher satisfaction, a more positive school environment and greater community support.
- **Community vitality:** Community schools promote better use of school buildings, and their

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neighborhoods enjoy increased security, heightened community pride, and better rapport among students and residents.

Community schools are accomplishing these improvements across the educational landscape — in districts large and small; affluent and disadvantaged; urban, suburban and rural. What makes them effective for so many student populations, often those most at risk, is an important part of the community school story.

In this report, you will learn about the advantages that distinguish community schools from traditional schools and enable community schools to do what even the most exemplary traditional schools cannot: Create the conditions necessary for every child to learn at high levels.

An Enduring Vision

For more than 100 years, community schools have promoted a simple, fundamentally American value: School, community and family are inextricably joined and must work closely together for the benefit of every child. Here is the Coalition's vision of a community school:

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, services, supports and opportunities leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Schools become centers of the community and are open to everyone — all day, every day, evenings and weekends.

Using public schools as hubs, community schools knit together inventive, enduring relationships among educators, families, volunteers and community partners. Health and social service agencies, family support groups, youth development organizations, institutions of higher education, community organizations, businesses, and civic and faith-based groups all play a part. By sharing expertise and resources, schools and communities act in concert to transform traditional schools into permanent partnerships for excellence. Schools value the resources and involvement of community partners, and communities understand that strong schools are at the heart of strong neighborhoods. In an increasingly complex and demanding educational climate, schools are not left to work alone.

Students engage in learning and service activities at a community school and have access to an array of personal and social supports. Community schools promote youth development activities and community-based learning and offer preventive health and social services before, during and after school.

Parents and community residents support their children's learning while developing their own knowledge and skills. Literacy classes, adult and parent education, employment training, family support, and leadership development all are part of the community school vision.

Families, youth and residents join with educators and community partners to articulate the community's goals for its students, and to help design, implement and evaluate activities. Participation of these stakeholders as decision makers helps ensure that community schools meet local needs and show measurable progress.

Because community schools typically arise as unique responses to the specific needs of their communities, no two are exactly alike. At the same time, each community school reflects a common set of principles that characterizes most national models and local implementations. These principles emphasize fostering strong partnerships, sharing accountability for results, setting high expectations for all, building on the community's strengths,

Community Schools: A Century of Innovation

In the late 19th century, Jane Addams' settlement house movement brought recreational, health and educational services to working-class, largely immigrant neighborhoods in Chicago and similar urban-industrial centers. By the early 1900s, John Dewey's concept of the "school as a social center" encouraged advocates to bring these opportunities into public schools.

Fostered by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and its work in Flint, MI, a formal movement to promote community education gained national visibility in the 1930s. Its goal was to make schools the social, educational and recreational anchors of their communities and to involve adults as well as young people in lifelong learning.

In the 1970s, Congress provided important seed money for the movement with the passage of the Community Schools Act (PL 93-381) and the Community Schools and Comprehensive Community Education Act. Although this funding was folded into a block grant during the early years of the Reagan Administration, its passage signaled important federal support for community schools.

Since the late 1980s, various local, state and foundation-funded efforts have produced new models that further developed the key features of community schools and greatly increased their numbers. Approaches designed to mobilize the assets of communities and address barriers to learning resulting from poverty, changing demographics and other contemporary facts of life emerged alongside more established community education programs. New community school efforts brought innovations such as family support centers, early childhood and after-school programs, health and mental health services, partnerships with business and civic groups, and initiatives to use school facilities as community centers. Local community schools based on models such as Beacons Schools, Caring Communities, Children's Aid Society, Communities In Schools, Healthy Start, Schools of the 21st Century and the West Philadelphia Improvement Corps, among others, flourished.

In 1998, the community school movement received a major boost from the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program. Based on a community education strategy, the new federal initiative promoted the development of local after-school programs as a way to build community schools. Its substantial funding — $1 billion in fiscal year 2002 — brought increased visibility to the community schools movement and renewed the federal government's support for a strengthened community role in public education.

The 2002 passage of the No Child Left Behind Act makes a groundbreaking federal commitment to *all* children's educational success. The legislation incorporates many elements that historically have been essential components of community schools, although they have not been emphasized as much as the accountability and choice provisions of the law. Through the community school movement, such desirable elements as parent involvement, after-school programs, violence prevention, service-learning, and coordination and integration of existing public and private services will help America leave no child behind.

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embracing diversity and avoiding cookie-cutter solutions (Coalition for Community Schools, 1999).

In this report, we examine how the community school vision — and the advantages it produces — results in an approach to education that is demonstrably better: A better way to learn and a better way to meet the challenges faced by today's public schools. As educators and local leaders examine options and make strategic decisions for their districts, we urge them to use this vision and the supporting evidence assembled here to achieve improved outcomes for students, their families and their communities.

Using This Report

Research makes it clear that community schools work. In districts across America, community schools are improving student learning, strengthening families and schools, and building communities so that they all function together to contribute to student success.

Community school partners see the impact of their work every day. Yet, if the community school vision is to take permanent root in American public education, other educators, parents, community partners and policymakers must have tangible evidence that community schools really do make a difference. The demand for improved testing outcomes and accountability in the No Child Left Behind Act reinforces the need for research-based results.

Two previous reports, developed by the Coalition for Community Schools with its partners, already have contributed to the research available on community schools: *Evaluation of Community Schools: Findings to Date* (Dryfoos, 2000) and *Learning Together: The Developing Field of School-Community Initiatives* (Melaville, 1998).

Making The Difference now adds significantly to this knowledge base by gathering in one place the research on which community schools are based and current evaluation data that show their effects.

Chapter 1 discusses the unique advantages that set community schools apart from traditional schools and make them a better choice for students. Community schools have the capacity to 1) garner additional resources and lessen the demands on school staff; 2) provide learning opportunities that develop both academic and nonacademic competencies; and 3) create social capital by building networks and relationships to support students, families and communities. Chapter 1 also presents snapshots of how community schools are making the difference locally.

Chapter 2 establishes five essential conditions for learning that are possible because of community schools' unique advantages. It presents the major research findings from various fields on which each condition is based. These conditions are clearly linked to attaining better learning and related outcomes for children and youth, as well as to strengthening families and communities. This chapter describes the general approach community schools use to fulfill each condition and includes a specific example from an individual school.

Chapter 3, the centerpiece of this report, presents a review of 20 current evaluations of community school initiatives. Data from these evaluations show the positive impact community schools have on students, schools, families and communities.

Chapter 4 moves from research to practice. It outlines four key elements that drive local efforts to create and sustain community schools: A motivating vision, connected learning experiences, community partnerships, and strategic organization and financing. This chapter demonstrates the alignment among these four elements and the qualities that make a community school better. Vignettes of community schools show these elements in practice.

Chapter 5 offers an action agenda for the multiple stakeholders who must work together to promote community schools locally. This agenda builds on the elements, identified in Chapter 4, that drive local community school efforts.

The vignettes and data interspersed throughout this report come from 15 community schools identified by Coalition partners as committed to the community school vision. Vignettes and data are identified by this icon:

To further illustrate the community school advantage, profiles of these 15 schools, including demographic and outcome data, appear in Appendix A. Profiled schools represent a cross-section of community school models at various stages of development and show a variety of styles and approaches within the community school movement. Most of these schools have high percentages of students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals; many have significant numbers of students learning English as a second language. They include elementary, middle and high schools in rural, urban and suburban communities.

Who Should Read This Report

Because community schools are, by definition, partnerships, *Making the Difference* is directed to a large audience. Indeed, for our country to succeed in educating all our children, a broad community of interest must be engaged in this important work of American democracy. Intended readers include:

- superintendents, principals, teachers and school staff;
- education policymakers, researchers and funders at the district, state and national levels;
- policymakers and potential community school partners in numerous fields beyond education, including local government, health and human services, youth development, family support, community development, and higher education, among others; and
- members of the community, including parents, neighborhood residents, community- and faith-based organizations, advocates, and grant-making institutions, whose vision and energy help sustain the best community school efforts.

Looking Forward

Leadership from every stakeholder is necessary for a successful community schools initiative. But money also matters (Melaville, 1998). Yes, more can be done with existing resources. But the severe funding constraints that are emerging at all governmental levels cannot be ignored. Leaders from different sectors must work together to support policies and financing for the full range of education and related services, supports and opportunities that all children need to succeed, and that schools, families and communities need to thrive.

As the findings reported in the following pages make clear, there is ample evidence to assert the connection between community schools and improved student learning. The Coalition acknowledges that we are just beginning to discover *how* actions and relationships in community schools affect learning outcomes. Based on what we now know, the news is good. For many young people, schools, families and communities, community schools are making the difference.

Typical Activities in a Community School

Community schools offer many activities, services and opportunities for students and adults. This list samples from the full range of possibilities. Local community schools are adding new ideas every day. Some of these activities also may be offered in traditional schools. The difference in community schools is that partners intentionally select each activity as part of a coherent vision, focused on fulfilling the conditions for learning and achieving specific results.

- Adult Education
- Arts Education
- Before- and After-School Programs
- Career Development
- Case Management
- Child Care
- Citizenship Education
- Community-Based Learning
- Community Organizing
- Counseling
- Crisis Intervention
- Cultural Activities
- Dental Services
- Early Childhood Education
- English as a Second Language
- Environmental Education
- Family Literacy
- Family Nights
- Family Support Centers
- Health Care Referral
- Health Promotion
- Home Visits
- Housing Information
- Job Training Programs
- Leadership Training Programs
- Mental Health Services
- Mentoring
- Multidisciplinary Curriculum
- Nutrition Counseling
- Parent Education
- Parent Leadership
- Peer Mediation and Conflict Resolution
- Pregnancy Prevention
- Prevention Services
- Primary Health Care
- Recreation
- School-to-Work Opportunities
- Service Learning
- Student Leadership Development
- Substance Abuse Prevention
- Student Support Services
- Tutoring/Literacy
- Violence Prevention
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Youth Development

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THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL ADVANTAGE

"This community school movement can be the salvation of schooling in America."

— Edward Zigler, Yale professor
father of Head Start
designer of Schools of the 21st Century

Walk into a fully developed community school and education buzzwords like "high expectations," "standards" and "accountability" come alive. Excellence is evident in teaching and learning that builds on students' strengths, talents and interests. But good things are happening in other well-run public schools, too. What makes a community school not only different, but better?

Simply stated, community schools have the capacity to do more of what's needed to ensure young people's success. Unlike traditional public schools, community schools link school and community resources as an integral part of their design and operation. As a result, community schools have three major advantages that schools acting alone do not. Community schools can:

- **Garner additional resources and reduce the demands on school staff.**
- **Provide learning opportunities that develop both academic and nonacademic competencies.**
- **Build social capital — the networks and relationships that support learning and create opportunity for young people while strengthening their communities.**

Independently, each of these advantages offers distinct benefits to students, families, schools and communities. Collectively, they enable a community school to provide a powerful and supportive learning environment with an impact far greater than the sum of its parts — offering students of all ages the opportunity to reach their full potential, as individuals and as contributing members of their communities.

Garnering Additional Resources and Reducing the Demands on School Staff

Schools can not ignore the needs of the whole child — social, emotional and physical — as they provide academic opportunities that address the full range of learning needs and styles. For most public schools, this challenge is beyond their existing resources. Some may see this as outside the core mission of schools.

Community schools, however, with their strategic use of linkages and partnerships, can reach outside their walls to leverage additional services, staff and programs to meet the essential needs of students and enhance the range and quality of their learning. Access to additional resources and the active involvement of community partners support and enhance school efforts to address the *facts of life* that affect both teaching and learning, such as changing demographics, too much unstructured time for children, transience, violence and unaddressed basic needs (see page 10).

With a shared vision and strategy, community partnerships lessen, rather than increase, the demands made on school staff. Partners share the responsibility for setting high standards and achieving accountability. In many community schools, a full-time community school coordinator, often employed by a community agency, mobilizes community assets and resources. Working on the school leadership team, this individual reduces the

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burden on the principal by helping cultivate and manage community relationships. This allows principals to focus on improving student learning. Teachers in community schools teach. They are not expected to be social workers, mental health counselors and police officers. Partner organizations, working with noninstructional school staff, aid in this work. They help teachers recognize student problems and connect students and their families with needed services and opportunities.

Community schools are intentional about how they bring together resources. Community school partnerships are not *ad hoc*, and more is not always better. In the most effective community schools, every activity is selected and designed for a specific reason. Partners understand that their contributions must help fulfill the conditions for learning and connect to the school's agenda.

Providing Learning Opportunities That Develop Both Academic and Nonacademic Competencies

Community schools build on the understanding that *both* academic and nonacademic competencies are important and related to long-range learning outcomes (Pittman and Cahill, 1992). What young people know and can do, how they think of themselves, and how they approach the world are intimately connected to their ability to succeed — not just in school, but later in life as citizens, workers and family members.

Students who are physically, socially and emotionally competent tend to succeed academically. Autonomy, awareness of others, responsibility and rational optimism all inform academic achievement. In traditional schools, students who lack these essential, nonacademic skills are,

Public Support for Community Schools

A scientific poll of Ohio citizens by the KnowledgeWorks Foundation illustrates public support for many aspects of the Coalition for Community School's vision.

Services and Opportunities in Schools

- 91% favor comprehensive after-school programs.
- 84% favor community member use of school facilities after school hours.
- 62% favor locating community social services for children on school grounds.
- 65% favor locating community programs for adults on school grounds.

School Facilities Planning and Use

- 70% of Ohioans believe that the general public should be invited to participate in the design and planning of their community's new school facilities.
- 65% believe city and school district dollars should be combined to build recreation and general public use facilities.

Citizen Involvement in Education

- 72% of Ohioans believe local public schools will not continue to improve unless citizens get involved.
- 71% believe public school officials are interested in the community's hopes and dreams for its schools.

Source: KnowledgeWorks Foundation, 2003.

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for the most part, left to acquire them outside school. In community schools, however, abundant opportunities for learning and exploration in school, after school and in the community help students mature in *all* areas.

The National Research Council (NRC) supports this approach. In a 2002 report, the NRC made it clear that intellectual, physical, psychoemotional and social development are equally important. Successful maturation in each category depends on the acquisition of multiple assets. For example, school success is only one of the assets that comprise intellectual development. Various nonacademic life skills, including the ability to navigate in more than one culture and to make good decisions, also are essential to intellectual development.

To develop physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually, young people need adult example and guidance, safe opportunities for experimentation, reflection, practice, and honest feedback from others. Community schools are uniquely suited to help provide these supports for all students, not only during the school day but after school, in the evenings and on weekends as well.

Building Social Capital

In community schools, partners who share their assets and expertise with the school are important sources of social capital. Just as financial capital — that is, money — enables people to purchase goods and services, social capital connects them to people and information that can help them solve problems and meet their goals. Typically, such networks are created among successful individuals and maintained by clear behavioral expectations and trust among members.

For young people, social capital increases exposure to role models and life options. It enhances their sense of connectedness to others, their sense of security and their belief in the future. For people of all ages, social capital makes it easier to share expertise, succeed individually and contribute to a healthy community.

For many young people — especially those from less-affluent communities and lower-income families — social capital, like financial capital, is not readily available. Community schools consciously work to change this. They build social capital, for example, through mentoring relationships with caring adults. School-to-work learning experiences significantly increase young people's knowledge of career choices and help them develop the skills needed to pursue them. From poetry slams to career days to "shadow government" exercises, community schools enhance students' cultural literacy and social competence.

Adult family members and community residents also increase their access to social capital through community schools. Community schools provide leadership training programs and offer ongoing opportunities to hold decision-making roles, to speak out in school and community forums, and to work with others on school and community projects.

Experiences like these create confidence and hone skills. Participants develop awareness of community institutions, build relationships and enhance their own standing in their communities. Opportunities to build essential occupational or life skills, such as English fluency, computer literacy or financial management, can open doors and improve families' lives for years to come.

While social capital is a scarce commodity in too many communities, it can be cultivated and replenished in even the lowest-income areas. The more relationships a community has to draw upon to share information, assist neighbors and solve problems, the more its social capital grows (Putnam, 1993, 1995). By engaging students and families in the community and its issues, community schools provide opportunities for young people and residents to give back to their schools and neighborhoods and add to their community's stockpile of social capital.

Leading to an Effective Learning Environment

Thanks to their unique advantages, community schools are able to create an effective learning environment — one in which the essential conditions for learning are fostered. In Chapter 2, we discuss these conditions. We show how community schools promote these conditions and present the research base that supports them.

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FACTS OF LIFE

Ten million children are at risk of school failure due to social, emotional and health issues (Dryfoos, 1994). Here are some of the realities that challenge today's schools and educators:

Cultural Disconnects

Nearly 20% of America's school-age children now speak a language other than English at home, and 15% of those homes are outside states where immigrants traditionally have settled. About 65% of America's population growth in the next 20 years is expected to be Hispanic and Asian (U.S. Census, 2000). Currently, 87% of America's teachers are white (American Federation of Teachers, 1999).

Too Much Unstructured Time

Eight million children spend up to 20–25 hours per week without adult supervision, alone or with friends (National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2003). Half of all teachers cite isolation during after-school hours as the primary reason for children's academic struggles (National Education Commission on Time and Learning, 1994).

Using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, researchers concluded that time spent "hanging out" with friends is a more accurate predictor of teenage risk behavior and school failure than income, race or family structure (Blum, Beuhring and Rinehart, 2000).

Poverty

In 2001, almost 12 million children lived in poverty. From 2000 to 2001, the number of children in extreme poverty grew from 4.8 million to 5.1 million, the first increase in eight years (Children's Defense Fund, 2002). National data show a 30-point variance in test scores for every $10,000 change in household income (Schulte and Keating, 2001).

Unaddressed Health Needs

In 2001, nearly 12.1% of all children under 18, fully 9.2 million, had no health insurance (Hoffman and Wang, 2003). Uninsured children are seven times more likely to go without needed medical care than children who have health insurance. With chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes and tooth decay on the rise, poor and uninsured children suffer from the lack of preventive care that often leads to a loss of school time.

The 1999 National Survey of America's Families found that more than 30% of low-income children did not have dental visits in the last year. Tooth decay affects nearly 50% of first graders and about 80% of 17-year-olds, and an estimated 51 million school hours are lost to dental-related illnesses each year (Hurst, 2003; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000).

Transience

High student transience is a major threat to academic achievement and the school environment (Biernat and Jax, 2000). Students who change schools frequently fall behind in their studies and are more likely to be retained in grade (Fowler-Finn, 2001). High student mobility correlates with lower student achievement and lower test scores even in schools with strong educational programs (Mao, Whitsett and Mellor, 1998). In schools with high rates of transience, even students who are not considered mobile do not perform as well as they would have in schools with a more stable enrollment (Kerbow, 1996).

Unsafe School Environments

In 2001, 30% of students in grades six through 10 were bullied (Nansel, et al., 2001). Victims of bullying may suffer from loss of self-esteem and may develop a fear of going to school (Ericson, 2001). In 1995, 17% of African American students said they feared attack or harm at school, in contrast to just 9% of all students. Disruptive and destructive student behavior affects the entire school community as "critical factors in student academic achievement" (Barton, Coley and Wenglinsky, 1998).

In 1995, teachers were the victims of 1,708,000 nonfatal crimes at school (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). Constant disruptions can dishearten teachers and lead to disillusionment with the profession (Appleby, 1990; Schneider, 1998; Gottfredson, et al., 2000). Unsafe school environments not only contribute to the departure of quality teachers, they also diminish the supply of people wanting to enter the field (Barton, 2000).

Overburdened and Underresourced Schools

When school staff is overwhelmed by economic, physical and social challenges in the student population, it can lead to lowered expectations from both teachers and learners (MetLife, 2001). Only 44% of teachers in largely low-income schools thought their schools had challenging curriculums and only 55% gave their fellow teachers an "A" in subject area knowledge. In more affluent schools, 61% of teachers considered their school curriculum challenging, while 65% of these teachers ranked their fellow teachers as well-versed in subject matter (MetLife, 2001).

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

Community schools are improving student learning and strengthening families and communities in a variety of measurable ways. Here are some improvements from the community schools profiled in this report. (To learn more about these schools, please see Appendix A).

Improved kindergarten readiness and greater reading proficiency in Green Bay, WI: Since Head Start began at **Howe Elementary School,** children's achievement has shown noteworthy improvement. Eighty percent to 90% of new kindergartners demonstrated school readiness in 2001 — up from less than 40% in 1997. Among third graders, 61% now perform at proficient or advanced levels on state reading tests, as compared to 40% in 1997. Scores among fourth graders have improved from 35% to 58%.

Reduced student mobility and above city average reading scores in Southwest Chicago: Strong family support at **Marquette Elementary School** has helped cut the student mobility rate nearly in half, from 41% to 22% between 1995 and 2000. Reading scores also are improving dramatically — at rates *exceeding* the citywide average — even though the poverty rate among students has risen from 68% to 96% over the last decade.

Fewer dropouts and higher college attendance in East Hartford, CT: The dropout rate at **East Hartford High School** has decreased from 22% to less than 2% annually over the last six years. Eighty percent of students go on to at least a two-year college — a 20% increase over the last seven years.

Improved nutrition for families and more advanced reading proficiency in Ankeny, IA: Partners added a benefits office of the WIC federal nutrition program for low-income mothers and children to a community service center offering a variety of health, education and social services available to students and families from **Northeast Elementary School.** During the first year, the number of low-income mothers using these services increased ten-fold. A large recreational and academic after-school program has helped boost the percentage of students scoring at advanced levels on standardized reading tests from 22% in 1999 to 33.8% in 2000.

More instructional time and decreased office referrals in Lincoln, NE: Teachers at **Elliott Elementary School** have gained an additional 15 to 45 minutes of instructional time per day because of positive classroom management techniques that YMCA partner staff have helped them learn. Referrals of disruptive students to the principal's office declined from five to one per day during the 2001 school year.

More parent time with children and smaller achievement gaps in South San Francisco: Seventy-one percent of parents at the **Families on Track** (FOT) community school at **Parkway Heights Middle School** report spending more time with their children since starting at the school. Lower-achieving sixth graders enrolled in FOT significantly reduced their achievement gap after one year.

Fewer suspensions and more above-average state test scores in Carson, CA: At **Carson High School,** suspensions were cut in half, from a rate of 10% in 1998 to 4.7% in 2000. The percentage of 11th graders scoring at or above the 50th percentile in standardized reading tests increased from 19% in 1999 to 25% in 2001.

Increased parent leadership and major improvement in state test scores in Boston: Many parents at **James Otis Elementary School** who are adult literacy students also take leadership roles within the school as volunteers or paid staff. In 2000, the school led all other Boston schools in improvement on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Systems test.

High graduation rates and academic excellence in St. Paul, VA: Ninety-four percent of students at **St. Paul High School** graduate. Nearly 90% meet state reading and writing requirements in core areas, and more than 90% pass state exams in biology and geometry.

Higher immunization rates and achievement gains in Indianapolis: At **Francis Scott Key Elementary School #103,** 100% of kindergartners and fifth graders received their immunization shots and are ready to start school on time in 2001. Almost three-quarters (73.2%) of third graders passed state assessments tests in 2001, up from 29% three years earlier.

Reduced pregnancy and increased academic proficiency in Tuckerton, NJ: Pregnancy rates at **Pinelands Regional Middle and High Schools** decreased among young teens from about 20 each year in 1991 to approximately three each year in 2001. Since 1993, the percentage of students passing the state high school proficiency test has climbed from 74% to 90%.

Closing the achievement gap in Kings Mountain, NC: The gap in proficiency between African American and white students is 30% in North Carolina, but just 10% at **East Elementary School.** Since East Elementary became a community school in 1992, the percentage of all students testing at grade level has approximately doubled, rising from between 45% and 50% to 92%.

Effective help for troubled students in Aurora, CO: North Middle School's Student Support Team has successfully helped 60% to 70% of students in crisis, facing potential disciplinary action or academic failures as measured by eliminating further disciplinary action, by providing services to help students cope or finding a more appropriate placement.

Reading gains, higher attendance rates and low suspensions in Minneapolis: Students participating in the Beacons program showed reading gains of 1.5 (on a scale of -2 to 7) vs. -.5 for comparison students on citywide assessments. Seventy-two percent of students participating in the Beacons program have a 95% or higher attendance rate at the **Webster Open Magnet School,** compared to 55.5% for non-Beacons students. Beacons students have a suspension rate of .15 days per students compared to .30 days per non-Beacons students.

Noteworthy increase in reading and math scores in Portland, OR: Student scores on state benchmarks increased in the two years that the Schools Uniting Neighborhoods initiative has been at **Woodmere Elementary School.** In third-grade math, the number of students at or exceeding benchmark increased from 77% to 89%. In third-grade reading, the number exceeding benchmark increased from 50% to 79%. In fifth-grade reading, students at or exceeding benchmark rose from 53% to 70%, and in fifth-grade math, from 58% to 76%.

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THE CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING

"We tend to put considerations of family, community and economy off-limits in education reform policy discussions. However, we do so at our peril. The seriousness of our purpose requires that we learn to rub our bellies and pat our heads at the same time."

— Paul E. Barton, Educational Testing Service
Facing the Hard Facts of Education Reform

For children, learning is as natural as breathing or sleeping. Their young minds readily embrace and investigate phenomena they encounter and they easily gather, consider and store information from a multitude of sources. Children learn in different ways, and many factors, including physical and learning disabilities, can help or hinder the process. Creating an environment in which all children can learn at high levels is a challenge for every school in America — a challenge that community schools are designed to meet.

In this chapter, we present an overview of the five conditions for learning that the Coalition believes are essential for every child to succeed. Creating these conditions for learning is a continuous process. Depending on the needs of their own student populations, most community schools will devote more attention to some conditions than to others. Without these conditions in place, however, many children will not succeed and fewer children will realize their full potential.

The Conditions for Learning

Condition #1: **The school has a core instructional program with qualified teachers, a challenging curriculum, and high standards and expectations for students.**

Condition #2: **Students are motivated and engaged in learning — both in school and in community settings, during and after school.**

Condition #3: **The basic physical, mental and emotional health needs of young people and their families are recognized and addressed.**

Condition #4: **There is mutual respect and effective collaboration among parents, families and school staff.**

Condition #5: **Community engagement, together with school efforts, promote a school climate that is safe, supportive and respectful and that connects students to a broader learning community.**

Several recent reports from well-respected researchers and organizations have been issued on effective learning environments. Page 16 presents a brief summary of their findings. While each of these studies has approached the subject in different ways and used different terms to describe its findings, their conclusions are remarkably similar and reinforce our five conditions for learning.

In the remainder of this chapter, we briefly describe the community school approach related to each condition and cite the research from numerous disciplines on which these conditions are based. The chapter shows the clear connection between what we know about the essential conditions for learning and what community schools are doing to foster them. Vignettes provide examples from local schools.

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Recent Reports on Effective Learning Environments

- A task force of the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine, in its report *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*, identifies eight features of positive developmental settings: physical and physiological safety; appropriate structure; supportive relationships; opportunities to belong; positive social norms; support for efficacy and mattering; opportunities for skill building; and integration of family, school and community efforts (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002).

- The Learning First Alliance, an organization of 12 leading national education associations, suggests in their report *Safe and Supportive Learning Environments* that what matters most is young people's need for physical and psychological safety; challenging and engaging curriculum; a sense of belonging and connection to others; and reassurance that they are capable, worthy people (Learning First Alliance, 2001).

- In their *Inputs For Learning Environments* chart, the Forum for Youth Investment, a leading national youth development advocacy organization, synthesizes six approaches conceptualized by different organizations to identify the following elements that promote learning: a challenging and engaging curriculum and quality instruction; a safe location in which to learn; well-met basic needs; multiple, caring relationships among adults and youth; high expectations for achievement; and abundant opportunities for young people's responsible participation and contribution (Forum for Youth Investment, 2001).

- Stanford University researcher Milbrey McLaughlin concludes in her report *Community Counts* that the most effective learning environments for young people are youth-centered, knowledge-centered and assessment-centered. Youth-centered environments respond to the diverse talents, skills and interests of young people and reach out into the community to involve them. Knowledge-centered environments deepen skills and competence; provide quality content and instruction; connect every activity to a clear learning curriculum; and include many kinds of teachers — both youth leaders and adults. Assessment-centered environments build in cycles of planning, practice and performance, with opportunities for feedback and recognition (McLaughlin, 1995/2000).

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CONDITION #1: The school has a core instructional program with qualified teachers, a challenging curriculum, and high standards and expectations for students.

Community schools start with academics. Maintaining a clear focus on academic excellence, a commitment to professional development and quality teaching, small class size, and adequate material resources are critical to the community school vision.

In community schools, a successful learning environment includes high standards and expectations for students and teachers; leadership that fosters innovation; and the time, training and resources that make excellence possible.

The Research Base for Condition #1

Key Findings

- **Competent and prepared teachers strongly affect student achievement.**
- **A rich curriculum with quality content and effective instruction challenges children to meet high standards and has a direct impact on improved student achievement.**
- **High-performing schools are guided by strong leadership and clear vision and create an atmosphere of trust among staff and parents.**
- **Small schools and class sizes contribute significantly to improved academic achievement and long-term educational outcomes, especially for minority, inner-city and low-income children.**

Competent and prepared teachers strongly affect student achievement.

- Teacher preparation and certification are "by far the strongest correlates of student achievement in reading and mathematics, before and after controlling for student poverty and language status" (Darling-Hammond, 1999).
- As a result of varying teacher effectiveness, fifth-grade students who had performed equally as second graders were separated by 50 percentile points on standardized exams only three years later (Sanders and Rivers, 1996).
- Teachers' expertise — measured by qualifications and experience — in 900 Texas school districts accounts for about 40 percent of the variance in students' reading and mathematics achievement from first through 11th grade — more than any other single factor. Recruiting, training and retaining highly qualified teachers nets greater increases in student achievement than does any other use of school funds (Ferguson, 1991).
- The amount of time teachers spend in content-focused professional development experiences has a strong effect on student learning. Time spent in special-topic or issue workshops without a strong content focus does not change teaching practices (Cohen and Hill, 1998).
- States that significantly invested in professional development during the 1990s have seen improved student achievement. Minnesota, North Dakota and Iowa, which have the highest achievement test score averages in the nation, "have all had a long history of professional teacher policies, and are among the 12 states that have state professional standards boards that enacted high standards for entering teaching." States that do not prioritize professional development strategies for teachers have not seen such improvements (McDay, 1997).

A rich curriculum with quality content and effective instruction challenges children to meet high standards and has a direct impact on improved student achievement.

- Students whose lessons have higher-quality content and whose teachers teach material above grade level perform better than students given lower-quality content and less-challenging instruction (National Center for Education Statistics, 1996).

Early Childhood Education and Community Schools

Making the Difference focuses on the work of community schools as K–12 institutions. Community schools recognize, however, that learning begins at birth and that positive early childhood experiences are closely connected to school success and success in life. Therefore, many community schools incorporate early childhood development programs.

Longitudinal research demonstrates the connections among high-quality, comprehensive early childhood developmental programs; improved learning; and long-term social outcomes. Community schools seek to create similarly comprehensive learning environments throughout a child's education.

- Chicago's Child-Parent Centers provided children ages 3 through 9 with sustained educational programming, health and nutrition services, and family support and parent involvement activities. Results from a 15-year longitudinal study of these children found enhanced involvement by parents in their children's education, lower rates of grade retention and special education placement, and lower rates of early school dropout and delinquent behavior (Reynolds, Temple, Robertson and Mann, 2001, 2002).

- The Abecedarian high-quality educational child care program provided low-income African American children with language development, health and social services, and parental supports for children from infancy through age 5. Children showed positive gains in language development and reading and math scores. By age 21, longitudinal study findings showed that participants in the Abecedarian program had completed more years of education, were more likely to attend a four-year college and had their first child later than nonparticipants (Campbell, Pungello, Miller-Johnson, Burchinal and Ramey, forthcoming). Mothers of participating children, especially teen mothers, achieved higher educational and employment status than did mothers of nonparticipants (Ramey, et al., 2000).

- The 1993 Cost, Quality and Outcomes Study of high-quality child care programs for children age 3 through second grade found that regardless of family background, children in higher-quality child care programs demonstrated greater mathematical ability, greater thinking and attention skills, and fewer behavioral problems than did children in low-quality settings (Peisner-Feinberg, et al., 1999).

- The High Scope preschool program emphasized active learning, personal and intellectual development, low staff-to-student ratios, home visits, and high parent involvement and support. After 20 years, African Americans who had participated in the program as high-risk 3- and 4-year-olds showed lower rates of crime, delinquency, teenage pregnancy and welfare enrollment. They also attained higher rates of positive behavior, academic achievement, employment, income and family stability than the control group (Schweinhart, Barnes and Weikart, 1993).

- Students in high-performing schools are expected to do more, have greater access to demanding courses and are taught in more engaging ways than students in comparison schools (Southern Regional Education Board, 2001).

- Classroom practices such as small-group instruction and hands-on learning have a more direct effect on student learning than do teacher education levels, years of experience and professional development (Wenglinsky, 2000).

- Achievement by at-risk students could be hindered by school factors such as narrow curriculum and rigid instructional strategies (Means and Knapp, 1991).

High-performing schools are guided by strong leadership and clear vision and create an atmosphere of trust among staff and parents.

- The most productive schools have principals who are efficient managers. A study of school reform in Chicago found that these leaders have a "vision in outline" of the kind of school they want and the ability to invite parents and teachers to help fill in the details. These principals understand how and why students learn, expect high standards from teachers, and provide them with adequate resources to do their job (Sebring and Bryk, 2000).

- High-achieving districts create a supportive workplace for staff and provide for regular staff development to help teachers be more effective. They also support shared leadership and decision making among staff and regularly express appreciation for their employees. School board leadership also affects leadership styles of principals and teachers in positive ways (Iowa School Boards Association, 2000).

- School districts demonstrating continuous improvement show common traits. These include the presence of an instructional dialogue in which teachers are continuously engaged in planning, implementing and reviewing curriculum and instruction; top-down support in which superintendents designate staff responsible for facilitating improved instruction and student learning; and multiple sources of instructional leadership (Pajak and Glickman, 1989).

- Schools with high amounts of trust and positive relationships between school staff and parents are much more likely to see higher student achievement than are schools with poor relationships. Researchers analyzed 100 schools that saw large gains in standardized math and reading tests over five years and 100 schools that did not make much improvement. One out of two schools with high trust levels made significant improvements, while only one out of seven schools with low trust levels made such gains. Additionally, the low-trust schools that did see improvements were those that built and strengthened trust over the five-year period; schools that remained without a trusting community had no chance of making academic gains (Bryk and Schneider, 2002).

Small schools and small class sizes significantly contribute to improved academic achievement and long-term educational outcomes, especially for minority, inner-city and low-income children.

- Fourth and eighth graders in small classes (fewer than 20 students) perform better than students in larger classes — even taking into account student demographics, overall school resource levels and cost of living. Inner-city students improved most; inner-city fourth graders in small classes progressed 75% faster than their peers in larger classes (Wenglinsky, 1997).

- Students in small classes in kindergarten through third grade have better high school graduation rates, attain higher grade point averages and are more inclined to pursue higher education (Pate-Bain, et al., 1999). Of 7,000 students randomly placed into small and large classes in their early school years, those from the small classes significantly outperformed those from the large classes every year through eighth grade in math, reading and writing. Students from the small classes maintained their advantage even after returning to regular-size classes. Larger gains were evident among minority students. Also, students who had

attended small classes demonstrated more assertive classroom participation than their peers (Finn, Fulton, Zaharias and Nye, 1989/1992).

- Small public schools in Chicago have experienced greater improvements in student performance and test scores, less violence, better conditions for teaching and learning, and higher degrees of satisfaction from parents and community members than have larger schools in the same area (Wasley, et al., 2000).

- A large study in Georgia, Montana, Texas and Ohio by the Rural School and Community Trust found strong evidence that small schools reduce the negative effects of poverty on student achievement by up to 50% and help narrow the achievement gap between poor and more affluent students. In general, the researchers found that student performance in schools with low-income children drops when school size increases (Howley and Bickel, 2000).

- Students attending smaller schools are safer, have better attendance and behavior, are more satisfied and connected with school, perform at higher levels, and are more likely to graduate (Nathan and Febey, 2001; Lawrence, et al., 2002).

CONDITION #2: Students are motivated and engaged in learning — both in school and in community settings, during and after school.

In community schools, the community is a resource for learning. Not every child learns best through words or numbers, though these are the channels for understanding emphasized in most classrooms today (Gardner, 1991). The best learning takes place when children have a voice, are able to ask questions, are actively involved and are encouraged to solve meaningful problems from their own life experience.

Young people can use the history, assets and challenges of their own neighborhoods as learning resources to forge connections between school and other aspects of their lives. This helps them become active participants in society. In community schools, in-school and out-of-school learning experiences are planned so that the knowledge, skills and competencies that young people need to succeed are reinforced in both settings.

The Research Base for Condition #2

Key Findings

- **Brain functioning from infancy throughout the school years is most efficient when learning is active and concrete.**

Community School Vignette: Learning to Read — Family Style

Boston's **James Otis Elementary School** uses Success For All, a literacy-based, whole-school reform model, to strengthen its curriculum, increase individual attention in extended reading periods, sharpen assessment and enhance professional development for teachers.

The school's partnership with Boston Excels, a citywide collaborative designed to promote family support, links the Success for All literacy approach to family involvement. According to Excel's Matt La Puma, "we knew from the research that as kids' families became more involved in their children's education, the kids did better." Classes are designed to help adults learn English in this low-income, largely Hispanic and Brazilian neighborhood by using the same material their children use in school. As a result, parents and children share in and reinforce each other's learning.

In 2000, Otis students outperformed the rest of the city's schools on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Systems test.

- **Students learn best when they are personally interested, when they are actively involved and when they consider the content important.**
- **Effective learning occurs when schools, after-school programs and other organizations use the resources and challenges of the community as a living textbook for learning.**
- **Enrichment activities that enhance rather than replicate classroom work help students acquire skills and competencies that contribute to classroom success.**

Brain functioning from infancy throughout the school years is most efficient when learning is active and concrete.

- Concrete experience promotes the formation of the strongest neural networks and makes brain cells more powerful and efficient. Hands-on manipulative learning creates more powerful information pathways than either representational or abstract learning (Wolfe, 2001).
- Active learning in multiple social contexts contributes to an increase in the thickness and weight of the cerebral cortex — factors that enhance the brain's cognitive capacity. When parents and community members work with the school to introduce students to learning in the outside world, social contexts and active learning increase. "Focusing only on children's time in school misses opportunities for guided learning in other settings" (National Research Council, 2000).
- The brain develops simultaneously on various levels and integrates its experience over time. Environments that encourage learners to discuss their thinking out loud, to compare ideas and do collaborative work contribute to increased learning (Wolfe and Brandt, 1998).

Students learn best when they are personally interested, when they are actively involved and when they consider the content important.

- Students are more likely to take initiative in learning — a key factor in improving school performance — when they attach relevance to what they are learning. When the content and reason for learning is compelling, students are motivated to pay attention to the material over a sustained period of time (Deci and Ryan, 1991; Krynock and Robb, 1999; Larson, 2000).
- When young people participate in programs that embrace youth development principles, they create important relationships with supportive, caring adults. They also learn new ways of acquiring and using knowledge through exposure to challenging and engaging experiences and benefit from opportunities for meaningful involvement. Students who have these experiences are more likely to become economically self-sufficient, healthy and productive family members and citizens than those who do not (Connell, Gambone and Smith, 2000).
- Students who participate in hands-on active learning experiences outperform their peers by 40% of a grade level in math and 70% of a grade level in science. Students whose teachers emphasize higher-order thinking skills in math also outperform their peers by about 40% of a grade level (Wenglinsky, 2000).
- Motivation and learning increase when young people spend time in safe settings that offer structured enrichment activities and acknowledge the student's need for control, choice, competence and belonging (Blum, Beuhring and Rinehart, 2000; Deci and Ryan, 1991; Larson, 2000).
- When students engage in contextual learning, they are more likely to be "intrinsically motivated, use self-directed methods aimed at acquiring in-depth understanding and have superior long-term recall than students involved in more traditional, teacher-led activities" (Pierce and Jones, 1998).
- Students who are highly involved in the arts do better than those who are not. Low-income eighth

graders highly involved in arts activities were more likely to score in the top two quartiles on standardized tests and less likely to be bored in school or drop out by 10th grade (Catterall, et al, 1998). A review of 62 research studies shows important relationships among the arts and reading, math, motivation, social behavior and school environment. Findings underscore the connection between practicing the arts and students' academic and social development (Arts Educational Partnership, 2002; Heath and Roach, 1999).

- Using technology in learning incorporates three primary learning theories: construction of knowledge, problem solving and hands-on learning (Herschbach, 1998). Students at risk for failure were given challenging, interesting, cooperative group work to do in a special technology classroom. When they were empowered to control their own work pace and behavior, they remained engaged, received better grades and accepted more responsibility for their work. Their success engendered feelings of pride and accomplishment that the students said they did not feel elsewhere (Day, 2002).

Effective learning occurs when schools, after-school programs and other organizations use the resources and challenges of the community as a living textbook for learning.

- Students can use their home communities as learning resources to help reduce the disconnect many feel between school and the rest of their lives. A survey of nearly 2,000 seventh to 12th graders at eight schools revealed that feeling more connected to school also lessens risks of unsafe behavior and poor health (Bonny, Britto, Klostermann, Hornung and Slap, 2000).

- Community-based learning leads to academic, behavioral and attitudinal gains. Forty schools that connected the school curriculum to the surrounding community saw improvements in reading, writing, math, science and social studies; discipline and classroom management; engagement and enthusiasm for learning; and pride and ownership in accomplishments (Lieberman and Hoody, 1998). Students using the Environment as an Integrated Context for Learning model scored higher than traditionally schooled students on 72% of

Community School Vignette: The Environmental Classroom

At **St. Paul High School** in rural St. Paul, VA, a course in Appalachian ecology was created around the reclamation of a wetlands area. The project was designed to develop skills in scientific observation and research, creative thinking, written argument, and public speaking.

Students research water quality, atmosphere and soil quality to learn how to restore the area. They have cleared out the nonwetland plants and trash and introduced aquatic species, built bridges and walkways for a picnic area, and constructed a learning center for future research. They write grant proposals, hold fundraisers, track financial plans, make presentations to local and state officials, and create partnerships with local colleges.

They also make lasting friendships and forge meaningful connections with their teachers and other adults in the broader community. "Everyone finds something in the class that they truly love. This class works for all kids because [they're] given the opportunity to do what they want and do it well. They're treated as if they have worth and what they say has worth," says science teacher Terry Vencil. She notes that her class covers all of the state's required teaching standards "without doing it through rote learning." At St. Paul, nearly 90% of students meet state reading and writing requirements in core areas and more than 90% pass state exams in biology and geometry.

California academic assessments measuring skills in language arts, math, science and social studies (State Education and Environment Roundtable, 2000).

- Participation in school-to-work programs increases selection of more rigorous mathematics and science courses, lowers high school dropout rates, and increases college-attendance rates (Committee on Economic Development, 1998). A review of existing studies shows that school-to-work programs "motivate students to achieve at higher academic levels, provide guided educational experiences outside the classroom to reinforce academic learning and create opportunities for enhancing learning through expanded instructional strategies" (American Youth Policy Forum and Center for Workforce Development, 2000).

- Service learning builds citizenship through involvement in civic action, increases students' sense of responsibility and workplace skills, and reduces negative behavior. A summary of studies on service learning found that these experiences are associated with academic achievement gains among students in elementary, middle and high school. They foster greater engagement in schoolwork, increase problem-solving skills and contribute to increased student attendance (Billig, 1999).

Enrichment activities that enhance rather than replicate classroom work help students acquire skills and competencies that contribute to classroom success.

- The Wallace-Reader's Digest Extended-Service Schools Initiative studied after-school programs in 20 communities that had adopted one of four community school models. The study found that participation in these programs was "associated with positive effects on school attitudes and behaviors" (e.g., paying attention in class, pride in the school, better attendance, increased confidence, making new friends, improved peer relations and trying harder in school), though it was too early to determine any impact on grades and test scores. The program also was "associated with behavior that could help youth stay out of trouble" (Grossman, et al., 2002).

- California's After-School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnerships Program operates in more than 963 schools serving approximately 97,000 students. An evaluation of the program during the 2000–01 school year found large improvements in achievement among the lowest-performing students in reading (4.2% of participants moved out of the lowest quartile on the SAT 9 compared to only 1.9% of all students statewide) and in math (2.5% of participants moved out of the lowest quartile compared to only 1.9% statewide). The evaluation noted a direct relationship between gains in math and levels of participation in the program — students who participated for 7.5 months or more improved their scores by 2.5 times those of non-participating students. The evaluation also recorded improvements in school attendance, particularly among highly truant students; improved behavior, including reduced suspensions among middle school students; improved social skills and behaviors; and improved feelings of safety (University of California-Irvine, California Healthy Start and Afterschool Partnerships Office, 2002).

- Quality enrichment activities help students master content taught during the school day by using more hands-on methods of engaging students, exploring additional interests and developing relationships with adults (Miller, 1995).

- A 10-year evaluation of LA's BEST, a large, school-linked enrichment program, reported notable gains for 20,000 elementary school participants. The participants improved their rate of school attendance; their English proficiency; their achievement on standardized tests in math, reading and language arts; their grade point averages; and their attitude toward school (Huang, Gribbons, Kim, Lee and Baker, 2000).

- Programs designed to solve particular problems or prevent specific behaviors tend to have narrow impacts. A more comprehensive youth development approach shows gains in academic, social and risk-taking areas, including work habits and emotional adjustment, as well as grades (Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray and Foster, 1998).

- High-quality enrichment experiences affect school performance. African American 12th graders who spend approximately 20 hours per week before or after school in "high-yield" learning activities do better than young people who do not participate (Clark 1990; 1999). Boys and Girls Clubs of America have developed Project Learn, a learning-focused after-school program for young people in public housing. After 18 months, participating students improved their grades from a C+ average to a B average. In comparison groups, average grades dropped (Schinke, Cole and Roulin, 2000).

- At-risk children who were mentored in a Big Brothers Big Sisters program for 18 months were 52% less likely to skip school, 37% less likely to skip a class, 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs, 27% less likely to begin using alcohol, 37% less likely to lie to their parents and 32% less likely to hit someone. Minority participants were 70% less likely to begin using drug than other minority children who did not have mentors (Tierney, Grossman and Resch, 1995).

CONDITION #3: The basic physical, mental and emotional health needs of young people and their families are recognized and addressed.

Community partners work with the school to provide access to affordable health, mental health and social services for students and families. The best curriculum and instruction cannot benefit children who often miss school or who are sick or upset when they do attend. When children receive regular health care, eat well, and know they can find help with emotional and family concerns, they attend school more and are able to pay more attention to what they are learning.

The Research Base for Condition #3

Key Findings

- **Comprehensive school-based health care helps improve attendance, behavior and grades.**

- **In addition to promoting students' self-confidence, mental health services contribute to better school performance and an improved school climate.**

- **Proper nutrition and physical exercise have a significant impact on student academic outcomes and participation in school as well as on psychosocial functioning.**

Community School Vignette: Immunizing against Failure

Three years ago at **Francis Scott Key Elementary School #103** in Indianapolis, more than one-third of kindergartners showed up for school without adequate immunizations. Their families lacked insurance, access to health clinics, or the time and information needed to secure this important preventive service. Because children are not admitted to school until they receive their shots, many lost valuable school time.

In the 2001–02 school year, a partnership among the Indianapolis Public School District, United Way's Bridges to Success program and the local health clinic made it possible for children to receive their immunizations at the school. One hundred percent of fifth graders and kindergartners fulfilled state requirements by receiving their shots before the school year began — and no school days were missed.

Community School Vignette: Reducing Risky Behavior

The **Pinelands Regional Middle and High Schools** in Tuckerton, NJ, are located in a rural, coastal area of the state. The New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program, which is funded by the New Jersey State Department of Health and Human Services to foster partnerships between schools and community agencies, has operated at Pinelands for 14 years.

Through these partnerships, the program offers primary and preventative health care, mental health and social services, employment assistance, family planning education, substance abuse counseling, pregnant teen and teen parent support services, transportation, a 24-hour teen crisis hotline, and recreational programs and activities to all students in the district. The "Pinelands Model" has been recognized as effective by Rutgers University's School of Social Work and has been replicated in others areas of the state. Since 1993, the percentage of students passing the state high school proficiency test has climbed from 74% to 90%. Teen pregnancy rates have dropped among young teens from about 20 each year to about three each year.

Comprehensive school-based health care helps improve attendance, behavior and grades.

- Comprehensive health and social services offered through the California Healthy Start Program have had an impact on improving student behavior, student academic performance and school climate. The lowest-performing students improved their reading scores by 25% and math scores by 50%. Illicit drug use was reduced from 24% of students to 14%. Students improved their self-esteem and increased their perception of support from parents, classmates, teachers and friends. Finally, families' unmet needs for basic goods and services were reduced by 50% (California Department of Education, Healthy Start Office, 1999).

- Students who use school-based health clinic services use fewer drugs, have better school attendance and lower dropout rates, fail fewer courses, and decrease disciplinary referrals by 95% (Pearson, Jennings and Norcross, 1999; Kisker and Brown, 1996).

- Students who are registered to use their school-based health clinic are more likely to graduate or be promoted than those who are not registered. African American male students are more than three times as likely to stay in school if they register for the clinic (McCord, Klein, Joy and Fothergill, 1993).

- Grades improve significantly when basic vision and hearing problems are corrected. First and second graders suffering from vision problems were randomly assigned to control and treatment groups. Students receiving services had a 50% greater improvement rate than the control group in reading, an almost 100% greater improvement rate in math, and close to a 200% greater improvement rate in reading comprehension (Harris, 2002; Lave, et al., 1998).

In addition to promoting students' self-confidence, mental health services contribute to better school performance and an improved school climate.

- Students participating in mental health interventions have better attendance, fewer behavioral incidents, improved personal skills, increased student achievement, and a higher sense of school and home connectedness than nonparticipating students (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 1999, 2000).

- Students who receive school-based mental health services show a significant decline in depression and an improvement in self-concept (Weist, Paskewitz, Warner, et al., 1996).

Proper nutrition and physical exercise have a significant impact on student academic outcomes and participation in school as well as on psychosocial functioning.

- Schools that offer intense physical activity programs see positive effects on academic achievement, including increased concentration; improved mathematics, reading and writing test scores; and reduced disruptive behavior, even when time for physical education reduces the time for academics (Symons, Cinelli, Janes and Groff, 1997; Centers for Disease Control, 2000; The Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education and Recreation and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, 2002).

- Students who increased their participation in the Universally Free School Breakfast Program increased their math grades and decreased their absenteeism and tardiness significantly more than children whose participation remained the same or decreased. Child and teacher ratings of psychosocial problems also decreased more for children who participated in the program more often (Murphy, et al., 1998; Meyers, Sampson, Weitzman, Rogers and Kayne, 1989).

CONDITION #4: There is mutual respect and effective collaboration among parents, families and school staff.

Community schools build on family strengths. A family's attitudes and behavior about education profoundly influence children's learning. In community schools, families are actively engaged in making decisions affecting their children's education and in expanding their repertoire as teachers, advocates and partners. When school staff and children see family members working as knowledgeable, able and active members of the school community, respect and collaboration increase and efforts to promote learning multiply.

The Research Base for Condition #4

Key Findings

- **Active parent and family engagement strongly predicts school success.**

- **Efforts to build respectful, cooperative relationships among parents, families, teachers and school administrators help family members feel more capable of contributing to their child's education and connected to their child's school.**

Community School Vignette: Building Parent Involvement

When Communities In Schools (CIS) opened the Family Resource Center at **East Elementary School** in rural Kings Mountain, NC, in 1992, there were just five parent volunteers, no after-school activities and very little parent involvement in academics. CIS brought Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts programs to the school and raised funds through local churches and businesses to provide uniforms, dues and badges.

Initially, the school administration and teachers volunteered their time to launch the effort. Parents got involved because of their children's interest and took an active role in planning programs and activities. Today, both programs are completely run by parents who have completed Den Leader training and 75 to 80 young people participate. Parents now are more comfortable at the school, and attendance at parent-teacher conferences has risen to over 96% from very low participation levels in 1992 before CIS began its partnership. In addition, says Principal Jerry Hoyle, "the leadership training these parents have acquired has given them the skills necessary to grow a very active parent-teacher organization — and to lead others through the process."

- **When families are supported in their parenting role, their involvement in their children's learning increases and student performance is strengthened.**

- **Consistent parental involvement at home and at school — at every grade level and throughout the year — is important for students' academic success and future aspirations.**

Active parent and family engagement strongly predicts school success.

- A recent synthesis of 51 studies on parent involvement found that "student achievement increased directly with the extent to which parents were engaged in the [parental involvement training] program" (Henderson and Mapp, 2002).

- Parent involvement — including factors such as parenting style, parent participation in learning activities and parental expectations — is a more accurate predictor of student achievement than family income or socioeconomic status (Henderson and Berla, 1994; U.S. Department of Education, 1994, 2001).

- Student test scores increased 40% more in schools with high levels of outreach to parents (including in-person meetings, sending materials home, communicating often and in times of difficulty for the child), than in schools with low levels of outreach (Westat and Policy Study Associates, 2001).

- The quality of parent-teacher interactions can predict improvement both in children's behavior and in academic achievement. When parents actively participate in their child's school and interact with their child's teacher, they gain a greater understanding of the expectations that schools have for students and learn how they can enhance their own child's learning at home, according to a study of 1,200 New England urban students (Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow and Fendrich, 1999).

- The quality of the partnership among school, family and community significantly boosts attendance and also contributes to a small, but significant, improvement in third graders' reading and writing standardized test scores (Epstein, Clark, Salinas and Sanders, 1997).

- Teachers tend to have higher expectations of those students whose parents collaborate with their schools and children have higher test scores and grades when their parents are more involved (Larueau, 1987).

- Students who spend at least nine hours a week guided by adults in "high impact" learning activities generally score at or above the 50th percentile on standardized tests. Students who spend only three hours a week under adult supervision in powerful learning activities only score at or above the 25th percentile (Clark, 2002).

Efforts to build respectful, cooperative relationships among parents, families, teachers and school administrators help family members feel more capable of contributing to their child's education and connected to their child's school.

- Parents' sense of comfort and connectedness to their child's school is strengthened when the school communicates with them often and when it provides frequent, meaningful opportunities for parents to be involved. Nine middle schools in their second year of implementing family involvement programs showed that, on the whole, a school's sense of community is strengthened when principals are good leaders with strong decision-making skills and when teachers communicate effectively with parents about their students' progress (Belenardo, 2001).

- Home-school relationships build trust and mutual respect among parents and school staff and help parents view themselves as knowledgeable, skillful, and able to contribute to their child and school (Mapp, 1999; Sanders, 2000).

- Students are more likely to bond with their teachers and to learn from them when they see frequent, positive interaction between their family members and school staff (Comer, 1988).

- When parents are encouraged to help their children, they make good use of available social supports and place high priority on activities with their children (Cochran and Henderson, 1986).

- Successful partnerships invite parents and community partners to take an active role in decision making at the school level; encourage honest, two-way communication about difficult issues; and create relationships that share power and responsibility (Lewis and Henderson, 1998; Mapp, 1999; Sanders and Harvey, 2000).

When families are supported in their parenting role, their involvement in their children's learning increases and student performance is strengthened.

- Engaging parents in a way that focuses on their assets in comprehensive and integrated school programs leads to stronger relationships between families and schools (Lopez, 2001; Scribner, Young and Pedroza, 1999; Wang, Oates and Weishew 1995).

- Students at a CoZi school have shown greater increases in math and reading scores than students in non-CoZi schools with similar demographics in the same district (the CoZi school reform model provides comprehensive social services to support students and families and involves the families in decision making) (Desimone, Finn-Stevenson and Henrich, 2000).

- The more involved parents are in their children's education, the more likely it is that they will continue their own education, thus becoming an even more effective teaching and learning resource and role model for their children (Henderson and Berla, 1994).

- Schoolwide programs that work with parents to develop young people's behavioral, social and academic capacity help increase academic and social skills and reduce behavior referrals and suspensions (Comer and Haynes, 1992).

- When low-income parents are supported in child-rearing strategies, taught to interact with their children in learning activities at home and encouraged to look to each other as resources, their children perform as well in preschool as middle-class children (Cochran and Henderson, 1986).

Consistent parental involvement at home and at school — at every grade level and throughout the year — is important for students' sustained academic success and future aspirations.

- Students whose parents stay closely involved in their educational progress throughout elementary and high school are more likely to stay in school and to enter and finish college (Eagle, 1989; Epstein, 1992).

- Researchers examining four facets of parental involvement — home discussion, home supervision, school communication and school participation — found that although parent involvement across all dimensions contributes to student academic achievement, home discussion is the most strongly related (Ho Sui-Chu and Willms, 1996; Muller, 1993).

- Families are best able to improve their children's life chances when they create a home environment that encourages learning, express high but realistic expectations for their children's achievement and future careers, and are involved in their children's school and community (Henderson and Berla, 1994).

- Disadvantaged students lose significant ground in the summer, making it essential that parents help plan summer learning activities and discussions related to

school (Entwisle and Alexander, 1992, 1994; Heyns, 1978, 1987; Karweit and Riccuiti, 1997).

- As students get older, parent involvement shifts from school to home. When parents talk about school, encourage studying and learning, guide their children's academic decisions, support their aspirations, and help them plan for college, their children are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, enroll in higher-level classes, and earn more course credits, regardless of family income and education (Catsambis, 1998; Catsambis and Garland, 1997; Fan and Chen, 1999; Ho Sui-Chu and Willms, 1996).

- Students learn more and perform better when they receive consistent messages about the value and importance of education and support from parents, teachers and churches (Epstein, 1987; Gutman and Midgley, 2000; Sanders and Herting, 2000; Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow and Fendrich, 1999).

CONDITION #5: Community engagement, together with school efforts, promote a school climate that is safe, supportive and respectful and connects students to a broader learning community.

Community school partners create safe settings, in school and out of school, that value young people and convey a sense of belonging. In community schools, the school climate is strengthened by active public engagement. Daily involvement of local partners and residents, in association with concerned teachers, broadens the helpful relationships and positive role models on which students can draw. The presence of these caring adults encourages students' connection to the community and increases the community's support for school concerns.

The Research Base for Condition #5

Key Findings

- **Young people who feel safe, accepted and connected to their schools are more likely to stay in school, develop social skills and do well academically.**

Community School Vignette: Creating a Sense of Community

The **Webster Open Magnet School,** with its diverse population of Hmong, African American, Latino and white families, is the site of one of six Beacons centers in Minneapolis. Leadership development is a key Beacons focus. Students participate in three leadership retreats annually and are expected to act as leaders in their schools. Several of the Beacons after-school and evening programs focus on relationship building and character development.

After seeing rising tensions between Hmong and Latino students at Webster, teachers and Beacons staff created an after-school class and camp program for students involved in negative incidents. Instead of resorting to suspensions, program leaders required students who found it hard to respect each other to attend six weeks of leadership, teamwork and cultural-competency classes and to participate in a shared camping trip in order to stay in school.

By the end of the program, the incidents had ended. Greater mutual understanding made the school a safer place for every student and helped build a sense of community.

- **Young people, teachers and other adults benefit from caring relationships, opportunities for participation and an atmosphere of high expectations.**
- **Community organizing and community engagement build support for school reform, improve school climate and set the stage for academic achievement.**
- **The condition of school buildings has a significant impact on both school climate and student achievement.**

Young people who feel safe, accepted and connected to their schools are more likely to stay in school, develop social skills and do well academically.

- Students who feel connected to school and to the people at their school report higher levels of emotional well-being. The bond they feel with the school serves as a protective shield against unhealthy behaviors and decisions such as using alcohol and illegal drugs, engaging in violent or abnormal behavior, becoming pregnant, and experiencing emotional distress (Blum and Rinehart, 1998; McNeely, Nonnemaker and Blum, 2002).
- Well-implemented efforts to engage the school community in conflict resolution, peer mediation, and direct teaching of social skills and self-management strategies have had positive effects on students' social skills and behavior (Derzon and Wilson, 1999; Dwyer and Osher, 2000).
- The most successful efforts to keep at-risk students in school provide young people with a community of support that helps them feel connected to school and puts a value on learning. They also take advantage of student interests and strengths and work to lessen the barriers that keep young people from participating. Teachers at such schools see educating at-risk students as a personal responsibility (Whelage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko and Fernandez, 1989).

Young people, teachers and other adults benefit from caring relationships, opportunities for participation and an atmosphere of high expectations.

- A caring, supportive relationship is one of the most powerful factors available to protect young people from a variety of negative influences. Meaningful interaction between adults and youth builds mutual respect and provides young people with mentors and positive role models (Benard, 1996).
- A supportive teacher-student relationship is critical to school success (Brophy and Good, 1986). School programs with positive teacher-student relationships — particularly ones that help the student feel connected to a learning community — have successfully reduced the dropout rate (Fine, 1986; Whelage and Rutter, 1986).
- Several longitudinal and ethnographic studies reveal that youth of all ages want a teacher who cares about them (Benard, 1995). One study observed that "the number of student references to wanting caring teachers is so great that we believe it speaks to the quiet desperation and loneliness of many adolescents in today's society" (Phelan, Davidson and Cao, 1992).
- Teachers also benefit from feeling connected to a positive school community. Teaching effectiveness and teacher satisfaction are related to the extent to which teachers view their work environment as a community — one that encourages collaboration, teacher involvement in school decision making and shared goals (Bryk and Driscoll, 1988; Lee, Dedrick and Smith, 1991; McLaughlin, 1993). Teachers who see themselves as full and active members of the school community attempt to "create similar learning contexts for their students" (Becker and Riel, 1999).

Community organizing and community engagement build support for school reform, improve school climate and set the stage for academic achievement.

- When school reform is aligned with a strong community-building mindset, the school and its teaching processes change dramatically, increasing the chances that reform will succeed. A study of the impact of community organizing and engagement efforts of five groups shows that enhancing leadership development, power and social capital in communities increases civic participation. Civic participation "leverages power through partnership and relationships within and across communities, as well as with school district, civic and elected officials," and creates greater public accountability. This enables community capacity to act as a resource to promote school improvement (Cross City Campaign, 2002).

- A study of 66 community groups in eight cities that are organizing to improve schools concluded that they have been successful in altering the political environment to enable change and, in some cases, helping to improve student academic performance. These groups help schools focus on important issues, identify and build public support and political capital, and establish a stronger sense of accountability between schools and communities. In addition, they have worked to upgrade school facilities, improve school leadership and staffing, bring in additional resources and programs to improve teaching and curriculum, secure new funding for after-school and family-support programs, and question unfair discipline policies (Mediratta, Fruchter, et al., 2001).

- Community engagement in 32 communities led to more positive attitudes, expectations and participation among parents, teachers and students, leading to higher-quality learning experiences. The increased involvement focused on improving physical conditions at the school and bringing in more resources. Data suggest that these efforts contribute to improved test scores (Hatch, 1998).

- Principals and community members signed declarations to transform 118 Texas Alliance elementary and middle schools into locally responsive and accountable neighborhood centers. The result: These schools saw a 42% increase in the number of children passing all sections of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) from 1999 to 2000, making the TAAS pass rate for Alliance School students double the state rate for math, reading and writing. Between 1993 and 1998, attendance rates in Alliance Schools climbed each year and now are above average for the state (Interfaith Education Fund, 2001).

The condition of school buildings has a significant impact on both a positive school climate and improved student achievement.

- Poor public school facilities adversely affect student achievement and teacher productivity and retention, according to a survey of Washington, DC, and Chicago teachers. In both cities, 3% fewer students in poorly rated facilities perform at or above basic on reading than their peers in better facilities. Math scores differ by 4% in Chicago facilities. In Washington, DC, more than 50% of teachers are dissatisfied with their facilities, while in Chicago more than 30% are dissatisfied. Of the teachers who rated their facilities poorly, more than 40% said that these poor conditions have led them to consider leaving their school and almost 30% of these teachers are thinking about leaving the profession entirely (Schneider, 2002).

- In a Virginia study of large urban high schools, student achievement was as much as 11 percentage points lower in substandard buildings than in above-standard buildings (Hines, 1996).

- In rural North Dakota high schools, there is a positive correlation between school condition (as measured by principals' survey responses) and student achievement and behavior (Earthman, et al., 1995).

- A study of working conditions in urban schools concludes that "physical conditions have direct positive and negative effects on teacher morale, sense of personal safety, feelings of effectiveness in the classroom, and on the general learning environment" (Corcoran, Walker and White, 1988).

Chapter 3

The Impact of Community Schools: A Review of Current Evaluation Findings

"School problems are not just schools' problems ... the challenges our schools face every day are actually challenges facing our families, our communities and our country."

— Joy Dryfoos and Sue Maguire
Inside Full Service Schools

Multiple studies, examined in Chapter 2, tell us that children are better able to learn at high levels when the five conditions for learning are in place. Because community schools are intentionally structured to fulfill these conditions for every student, more children who attend community schools are likely to succeed intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially.

A growing body of research shows that community schools have positive effects on students, families, schools and communities. These data suggest that when community school efforts to fulfill all the conditions for learning are integrated into a comprehensive strategy, the benefits for student learning are multiplied.

Broad Findings

- **Student learning: Community school students show significant and widely evident gains in academic achievement and in essential areas of nonacademic development.**
- **Family engagement: Families of community school students show increased stability, communication with teachers and school involvement. Parents demonstrate a greater sense of responsibility for their children's learning success.**
- **School effectiveness: Community schools enjoy stronger parent-teacher relationships, increased teacher satisfaction, a more positive school environment and greater community support.**
- **Community vitality: Community schools promote better use of school buildings, and their neighborhoods enjoy increased security, heightened community pride, and better rapport among students and residents.**

In this chapter, we present results from evaluations of 20 community school initiatives throughout the United States, including national models, state-funded approaches and local initiatives. These initiatives are at various stages in the process of fulfilling the five conditions for learning.

These evaluations represent the most substantive research known to the Coalition that is currently available on community school implementation. The table that begins on page 35 briefly describes each initiative. Further details of the evaluations are presented in Appendix B.

We organize the results of these evaluations by their impacts on young people, schools, families and communities. For each area of impact, we present an overview

of results from relevant studies. We also cite specific findings that show the improvements community schools have made in each area. Demonstrable changes include both long-term learning outcomes and near-term indicators of progress.

All of the evaluations focused on initiatives involving multiple schools. Not all the initiatives explicitly term themselves "community schools" and the models represent different approaches. They are similar, however, in that their purposes, strategies and activities promote most, if not all, of the conditions for learning characteristic of community schools.

When reviewing these evaluation summaries, readers should note that if an initiative does not report specific findings in a given area, it does not necessarily mean that none were achieved. It is as probable that the missing area was not a primary objective of that evaluation. Evaluations are time-consuming and costly, so they typically are designed to provide information about processes, elements or outcomes the initiative or funder most needs to know about at a given developmental point. Each of the evaluations reviewed here asked different questions and varied in the extent to which it addressed the initiative's impact on young people, families, schools or communities.

What validity should be given to the findings reported here? Even though causality — the most stringent research standard — cannot easily be established outside a controlled laboratory setting, the strength and direction of these current findings warrant confidence. We agree with Children's Aid Society evaluators that a connection can be assumed when 1) findings are consistent with the best available research and 2) there is anecdotal corroboration among participants and observers about the effects and impacts (Cancelli, Brickman, Sanchez and Rivera, 1999). As we outlined in Chapter 2, the conditions for learning emerge directly from research findings in various fields. Vignettes of individual sites profiled throughout this report clearly illustrate that there also is abundant anecdotal corroboration about the effects and impacts of a community school approach.

ABOUT THE EVALUATED SCHOOL INITIATIVES

National Models

Initiative and Evaluators	Description of Initiative
Children's Aid Society Center for Human Environments, CUNY Graduate Center; Fordham University Graduate Schools of Education and Social Services	In 1989, the Children's Aid Society (CAS) partnered with the New York City Public School District and other community partners to create a comprehensive way to address the multiple challenges of students in District 6. CAS schools incorporate a strong core instructional program; enrichment activities designed to expand student learning opportunities and support their cognitive, social, emotional, moral and physical development; and a full range of physical and mental health services designed to remove barriers to learning and improve the well-being of children and families. With strong collaboration among community partners, CAS aims for high levels of parent and community involvement. Today there are five CAS schools in New York City, and the model has been adapted to approximately 100 sites nationally and internationally.
Communities In Schools The initiative tracked data from its local sites	Communities In Schools (CIS) helps kids succeed in school and prepare for life. CIS believes that all children deserve five basics: a one-on-relationship with a caring adult, a safe place to learn and grow, a healthy start and a healthy future, a marketable skill to use upon graduation, and a chance to give back to peers and community. Core services include case management to bring resources and services to students at the schools. There are 179 CIS programs in 32 states, serving approximately 2,500 schools and other education sites.
New York City Beacons Academy for Educational Development	Beacons centers are community centers located in public school buildings, offering students and their families recreational, social service, educational enrichment and vocational activities before and after school, in the evenings, and on the weekends. Supports and services include providing safe places, leadership skills development, supervised engaging activities promoting positive behaviors and practices, adult education, parent involvement, family support, family and community service activities, and health services.
School of the 21st Century Yale Bush Center for Social Policy	The School of the 21st Century (21C) is a school-based child care and family support model that promotes the optimal growth and development of children beginning at birth. The 21C model transforms the school into a year-round, multiservice center providing services from early morning to early evening. Since 1988, more than 1,300 schools in 20 states have implemented the program. Schools are linked to community resources to build an environment that values children. Components include all-day, year-round child care for preschoolers; before- and after-school and vacation care for school-age children; parent support programs; information and referral services; network building and training for child care providers; and health education and services.

State-Funded/Statewide Approaches

Initiative and Evaluators	Description of Initiative
California Healthy Start SRI International; California Department of Education	Established by the California legislature in 1991, Healthy Start offers school districts and their collaborative partners seed money to fund long-term change initiatives to improve the well-being and academic performance of young people, families and communities. Services at or near the school site promote health, educational and social development of children. Core clients are children and families most in need of services. Types of services provided include academic (tutorial, truancy counseling, adult basic education, youth development, ESL, extended day care and early childhood education); health (immunizations, screening and referrals); and mental health (psychological evaluations, counseling, outpatient substance abuse treatment programs). As of the 1999 evaluation, there were 469 operational grantees with 1,122 associated schools. Healthy Start programs are located in 49 of the 58 counties in California, in both rural and urban areas.
Illinois Project Success Center for Prevention Research and Development, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois	Project Success (PS) is an Illinois initiative designed to help children succeed in school by providing health and social services supports for children and their families. Six fundamental outcomes include improvements in parent involvement, collaboration, school-based school-linked services, school attendance, decreased truancy and academic achievement. The initiative began in six sites (each site targets eight schools) in 1992, and by 2001 was funded in 89 counties. In 2002, the state elected not to continue its funding, but many schools continue to do the work of the Project Success Initiative.
Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Program Rutgers University and R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville, Inc; Southern Regional Education Board	Family Resource and Youth Services Centers are designed to help families and children solve nonacademic problems that interfere with student learning. Core services at elementary and middle schools include full-time preschool/child care for 2- and 3-year-olds; after-school and summer child care for 4- to 12-year-olds; home visits and new parent support; parent literacy and education programs; support and training for child care providers; and direct provision or referral to health services. Youth Services Centers offer referrals to health and social services; employment counseling, training and placement for older youth; counseling for drug and alcohol abuse; family crisis management; and mental health.
New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program Academy for Educational Development	The New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program (NJSBYSP) is a state-funded initiative providing a range of services for adolescents at or near their schools, with at least one project located in every county of New Jersey. Core services available to every student with parental permission include individual and family counseling; primary and preventive health services; drug and alcohol abuse counseling; employment counseling, training and placement; and recreation. Sites managed by other lead agencies offer pregnancy prevention, teen parent support, violence prevention, academic support and positive youth development.

Initiative and Evaluators	Description of Initiative
Texas Alliance Schools Internally tracked regional student and school data in Texas	Since 1991, the Alliance Schools Initiative has focused on bringing parents together with teachers and community leaders to try to solve problems in schools, learn about school reform practices, and work together to address the needs of children and their families. The initiative focuses on restructuring the relationship among stakeholders in school communities, including parents, teachers, school administrators, students, community and business leaders, and public officials. The initiative teaches the art of communication — exchanging ideas, debate and compromise — in order to change the culture of schools and neighborhoods. The strategy increases parental engagement, teacher morale and student success at Alliance school campuses. During the 1999–2000 school year, there were 129 Alliance Schools serving 89,994 students in 20 Texas school districts. Texas Industrial Areas Foundation organizations lobbied the Texas Legislature since 1993 to provide $14 million in 1999 to the Investment Capital Fund, which directly funds schools committed to reform though local control and accountability.
Washington Readiness to Learn RMC Research Corporation	Readiness to Learn's (RTL) mission is to create a committed, continuing partnership among schools, families and communities that provides opportunities for all youth to achieve at their highest learning potential; live in a safe, healthy, civil environment; and grow into productive community members. The initiative's primary goal is for children and youth to be successful in school. The RTL initiative emerged from grassroots efforts of community forums, town meetings, local community advocates and state leaders. Twenty-four local consortia across Washington state received RTL grant funds to implement comprehensive, responsive service plans that were responsive to the needs of children, youth and their families. The planning for these services was a collaborative effort by many partners to deliver these services.
Urban School Initiative School Age Child Care Project Evaluation Services Center, University of Cincinnati	One hundred twenty-five school-age care centers in 17 urban Ohio school districts have implemented quality school age child care programs. Core components included in each program are innovative educational activities that support and expand upon the school day curriculum; daily time for homework help and tutoring with a special emphasis on academic enrichment in reading, math, computer use and other areas; choices of experiences each day; access to educational/enrichment materials and supplies; a nutritious snack/meal every day; low child-to-adult ratios; and quality staff.

School District/Local Initiatives

Initiative and Evaluators	Description of Initiative
Achievement Plus Internally tracked data in St. Paul, MN	Achievement Plus schools employ a standards-based curriculum based on the America's Choice model. Teachers undergo in-depth training and professional development. Core activities include before- and after-school extended learning programs, family resource centers, family programming, attendance programs, and health and social services. Extended learning opportunities for students are linked to teaching and learning. The school is a hub for the community to provide services and supports to students and families, reducing barriers to learning and achievement. Three Achievement Plus schools have opened in St. Paul, MN.
Boston Excels Internally tracked data in Boston	The Boston Excels model is an initiative of the Home for Little Wanderers. Boston Excels addresses the comprehensive needs of young people, families and their schools by partnering with them to provide effective social services, a prevention team of clinicians and social workers, and opportunities that engage and empower parents and the community. Currently there are five Boston Excels schools in the Boston area.
Bridges to Success Internal citywide data in Indianapolis	Bridges to Success (BTS), an initiative of the United Way of Central Indiana, works to strengthen connections and share resources among school, parents and community institutions. By creating partnerships, BTS aims to increase access to health and human services and youth development opportunities; reduce risk factors that impact student achievement; and increase the number of students who attend school and graduate. BTS engages families, youth, neighborhoods, agencies and schools in developing systems in their own communities to bring these supports into the schools. A coordinator manages the multiple resources and leads a community council that works with school staff to develop effective programs. Currently there are 41 BTS schools in the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS).
Center for School Change Initiative Rainbow Research	Twenty rural school/community collaborative projects that bring community resources into schools, connect students and schools to their communities, build community pride in students and communities, make school facilities more accessible for community use, and pool resources to create facilities and programs that benefit both schools and community.
Dallas Youth and Family Centers Program Division of Evaluation and Accountability, Dallas Independent School District	The centers provide physical and mental health care to students and their families at nine locations, each serving multiple schools, throughout the Dallas School District. Core services include mental health care, counseling, case management, family-home involvement programs, youth development activities, and family education and family planning workshops.
Hamilton County Families and Children First Council Institute for Policy Research, University of Cincinnati	The Children First Plan is a comprehensive school-based preventative program now located in 12 schools. After a planning process that included more than 100 members of the social service community and 50 community focus groups, the plan was implemented in schools in 1997. It initially was a three-year pilot project, but has been extended and expanded for an additional three years, currently in year six. It aims to provide full-service schools that promote academic achievement, ensure good physical and mental health, and encourage positive youth development and family involvement. Each school houses a coordinator to develop integrated programs and to manage the various agency resources. This program uses pooled funding from 12 agencies and contracts with more than 35 agencies for services and resources. Its priorities are to reduce high school dropout rates, reduce the number of abused and neglected children, reduce suspension and truancies in preschool through sixth grade, and increase students' feelings of school connectedness.

Initiative and Evaluators	Description of Initiative
LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program Center for the Study of Evaluation, University of California at Los Angeles	LA's BEST is a comprehensive after-school intervention program that provides activities to meet specific educational, social and motivational goals. The program has expanded to 69 sites and is available from the end of the school day until 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, at no cost to parents. Sites are selected based on educational needs: low achievement, low economic status of the community, and high gang or crime rates in the neighborhood. Goals of the program for students in kindergarten through fifth grade are to provide a safe environment after school, educational enrichment activities to support and augment the regular-day program, recreational activities, and interpersonal skills and self-esteem development. Homework assistance, field trips and performing arts also are emphasized. Students are expected to enroll and participate on a regular basis.
Polk Bros. Full Service School Initiative Chapin Hall Center for Children, University of Chicago	The Full Service School Initiative aimed to improve the physical and psychological well-being of children in three elementary or middle schools in order to make a positive impact on their school-related behavior and academic achievement. The objectives were to improve access to recreation, education, social service and health programs by developing an integrated and coordinated service delivery mechanism at each school; to involve school faculty and staff, students, parents, and community and nonprofit representatives in a joint decision-making process regarding programs and services in or near the school and in monitoring their success so that each takes ownership of the process; to improve the relationship between parents and school staff; and to create a mutually supportive environment where classroom and social support services work together to enhance student achievement. The initiative required schools to work with a lead partner agency.
Schools Uniting Neighborhoods SUN Evaluation Workgroup consisting of several internal researchers and PhDs from Western Oregon University	The Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) initiative works through partnerships with local schools, districts and community organizations to improve the lives of children, their families and their communities. Founded by the City of Portland and Multnomah County in 1999, in partnership with the State of Oregon and Multnomah County Public School Districts, the initiative began with eight schools and has grown to 15. SUN schools extend the school day from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm and serve as community centers. They link with libraries, parks, community centers, churches, neighborhood health clinics and businesses for services and resources. They offer an array of services and activities, primarily before- and after-school academic and enrichment programs that are linked with the school day; family involvement and strengthening programs; health and social services for students, families and community; community events; and adult education opportunities.

The Impact of Community Schools on Young People

All 20 community school evaluations focused on improving outcomes for young people. Nearly all chose to measure academic achievement specifically. That so many evaluators chose to do this for relatively young community school initiatives reflects the importance of student academic performance, as well as the pressure educators feel to produce results, particularly as measured by test scores.

Seventy-five percent of the evaluated initiatives achieved improvement in individual academic achievement — results that speak to the power of creating environments and opportunities in the school and community that satisfy all the conditions for learning. These findings underscore our belief that academic achievement is intertwined with physical, social and emotional well-being; the development of personal competencies in many areas of life; and the engagement of a strong family and community.

In addition to academic achievement as measured by grades and testing, more than half of these evaluations looked for — and found — evidence of a wide variety of positive developmental indicators. These include beneficial shifts in the actions, attitudes, interests, motivations and relationships of young people participating in community school activities. Greater exploration of these changes and how they are promoted in community school settings might go a long way toward understanding and achieving the full impact of community school initiatives on academic achievement.

Findings from the 20 studies show the following specific impacts on young people attending community schools:

- **Improved grades in school courses and/or scores in proficiency testing**
  (Achievement Plus; Boston Excels; Bridges to Success; California Healthy Start; Children's Aid Society; Communities In Schools; Dallas Youth and Family Centers Program; LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program; Polk Bros. Full Service School Initiative; Project Success; Readiness to Learn; Schools of the 21st Century; Schools Uniting Neighborhoods; Texas Alliance Schools; Urban School Initiative School Age Child Care Project)

- **Improved attendance**
  (Boston Excels; Bridges to Success; Children's Aid Society; Communities In Schools; Dallas Youth and Family Centers Program; Hamilton County Families and Children First; Readiness to Learn; Urban School Initiative School Age Child Care Project)

- **Reduced behavioral or discipline problems and/or suspensions/expulsions**
  (Bridges to Success; Communities In Schools; Hamilton County Families and Children First; Readiness to Learn; Urban School Initiative School Age Child Care Project)

- **Increased access to physical and mental health services and preventive care**
  (California Healthy Start; Communities In Schools; Dallas Youth and Family Centers Program; Hamilton County Families and Children First; Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Program)

- **Greater classroom cooperation, completion of homework and assignments, adherence to school rules, and positive attitude**
  (Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Program; New York City Beacons; Urban School Initiative School Age Child Care Project)

- **Greater contact with supportive adults**
  (Communities In Schools; LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program; Polk Bros. Full Service School Initiative)

- **Improvements in personal or family situation, abuse, or neglect**
  (Dallas Youth and Family Centers Program; Hamilton County Families and Children First; Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Program)

- **Increased promotions and on-time graduations**
  (Communities In Schools; LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program)

- **Increased sense of personal control over academic success**
  (Children's Aid Society; LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program)

- **Decrease in self-destructive behaviors, including irresponsible sexual activity and drug use**
  (California Healthy Start; New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program)

- **Reduced dropout rate**
  (Communities In Schools; Hamilton County Families and Children First)

- **Increased sense of attachment and responsibility to the community**
  (Center for School Change Initiative)

- **Increased sense of school connectedness**
  (Hamilton County Families and Children First)

- **Strengthened social and public-speaking skills**
  (Center for School Change Initiative)

- **Increased capacity for self-direction**
  (Center for School Change Initiative)

- **Positive effects on educational aspirations and credit accumulation**
  (New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program)

It should be noted that looking for outcomes of any kind before a program has been in existence for three to five years often is premature (Sanders, 1992). Long before all sites are fully established, most community school initiatives experience considerable pressure to show measurable improvements, especially in academic results. Community awareness of program goals and accomplishments can keep expectations reasonable, as experience in Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Program shows.

Early studies of the Kentucky centers suggested that "involvement in well-organized family resource and youth service programs may have a role in altering the risk for poor school performance in groups of youth who, according to a variety of social indicators, may be at risk for negative outcomes" (Kalafat, Illback and Sanders, 1999). However, evaluations over several years found no direct connection between centers' activities and school performance. Evaluators made it clear that this was due to a problem with the data rather than the program — the hard data needed to show such a connection did not exist. This limitation has in no way eroded public support. The mission of the initiative to address specific problems in the lives of individual students is exceptionally clear, and the degree of community and legislative support for the services and support it provides is extremely high. As a result "there has been little or no pressure for a more conclusive evaluation effort" (SREB, 2001).

The Impact of Community Schools on Families

Families who participate in community schools benefit from access to a range of services and supports and greater engagement in their children's education. As research reported in Chapter 2 makes clear, family-related factors, including parent educational attainment, stress levels, and communication with teachers and school staff are closely related to student performance.

Eleven of the 20 studies measured and reported specific impacts on families:

- **Improved communication with schools and teachers**
  (Boston Excels; Hamilton County Families and Children First; New York City Beacons; Schools Uniting Neighborhoods)

- **Improved stability and/or other outcomes related to basic housing, food, transportation and employment needs**
  (California Healthy Start; Polk Bros. Full Service School Initiative; Readiness to Learn)

- **Increased ability to work more hours, miss work less or to move from part-time to full-time work**
  (Schools of the 21st Century; Urban School Initiative School Age Child Care Project)

- **Increased confidence for parents in their role as their child's teacher**
  (Boston Excels; Project Success)

- **Greater attendance at school meetings**
  (Hamilton County Families and Children First; New York City Beacons)

- **Increased knowledge of child development**
  (California Healthy Start)

- **Strong sense of responsibility for children's schooling**
  (Children's Aid Society)

- **Decreased family violence**
  (California Healthy Start)

- **Increased civic participation**
  (Boston Excels)

- **Improvement in adult literacy**
  (Boston Excels)

Although only 11 of the studies we reviewed focused on measuring family outcomes, virtually all of the 20 community school initiatives work closely with families. Parent participation and engagement is seen as highly instrumental in children's success.

The Texas Alliance Schools initiative exemplifies this view. Although the Alliance Schools' internally developed outcomes report focused primarily on student achievement, other articles have provided anecdotal information that described how parent involvement directly led to positive results (Hatch, 1998). At one school, parents and teachers joined forces to extend the school year by two weeks, allowing many children to strengthen their English language skills enough to take the state proficiency test in English. At another school, parents encouraged the development of an after-school cultural arts program to help academically struggling youngsters build subject area skills. Everyone who began the program passed all sections of the state test the next year.

The Impact of Community Schools on Schools

Previous work by the Coalition (Melaville, 1998) suggests that although community schools are focused on strengthening school functioning, most beginning efforts do not specifically target school curriculum or instruction. However, as initiatives mature and as trust grows among partners, their influence in all aspects of school functioning increases. This influence often begins with increased parent participation, leads to more positive school climate, and eventually results in changes to school policies and practice.

Fourteen of the evaluations presented in Chapter 3 examined the whole-school environment. The evaluations cited here show significant improvements in parent engagement as well as increased staff support for child and family supports. In addition to evidence of enhanced physical and emotional climate, some evaluations point to the capacity of community school interventions to affect the behavior and attitudes of teachers as well as learners.

Specific evaluation findings on the impact of community school activities on school functioning show:

- **Principal and staff affirmation of on-site services as an important resource**
  (Dallas Youth and Family Centers Program; Hamilton County Families and Children First; Project Success; Readiness to Learn; Schools Uniting Neighborhoods)

- **Increased parent participation in children's learning**
  (Boston Excels; Hamilton County Families and Children First; Project Success; Texas Alliance Schools)

- **Growth in nonpartisan support for public education and increased resources through increased community partnerships**
  (Hamilton County Families and Children First; Readiness to Learn; Texas Alliance Schools; Urban School Initiative School Age Child Care Project)

- **Teacher recognition of parent participation as an asset**
  (Children's Aid Society; Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Program; Project Success)

- **Increased classroom emphasis on creative, project-based learning connected to the community and innovations in teaching and curriculum**
  (Achievement Plus; Center for School Change Initiative)

- **School environments are more cheerful and orderly; there is increased perception of safety**
  (Children's Aid Society; Polk Bros. Full Service School Initiative)

- **Services well-integrated into the daily operation of schools**
  (Hamilton County Families and Children First; New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program;)

- **Teachers spend more time on class preparing and working with students**
  (Children's Aid Society)

- **Improvements in teacher attendance**
  (Children's Aid Society)

These findings lend credence to the view that community school innovations have the capacity to influence overall school functioning, including teaching and instruction. The evaluation of the Center for School Change Initiative, for example, reported that partnership activities at participating schools modeled innovations like multiage classrooms and project-based learning and helped catalyze innovations in teaching strategies and curriculum development. To some extent, new approaches were picked up at other district schools. Evaluation findings also suggest that innovations help retain the best teachers.

Change in teacher attitudes and behavior is an important, but unexplored, area in most of the evaluations reviewed here. Teachers' perceptions and attitudes about student behavior and initiative activities were surveyed frequently, but few focused on how teachers were affected. Since the elements of successful teaching and learning are closely interrelated, these innovations that promote learning also can be expected to affect what teachers actually do. Children's Aid Society evaluators looked for evidence of this kind of behavioral change. They found that teachers in community schools spent more time on class preparation and working with students than did teachers in comparison schools. Teachers at community schools also had better attendance rates (Cancelli, et al., 1999).

The Impact of Community Schools on Communities

The flow of resources in community schools runs from community to school — and back again into the community. Benefits to families, such as increased physical, economic and emotional stability, clearly contribute to the stability of their communities. So do more and better relationships among community agencies, businesses and civic organizations, accompanied by a greater awareness of the services they offer. These connections help create the social networks that define and strengthen a community for all its residents.

Increased positive behavior and more constructive after-school choices among students also affect the quality of local life. For example, the extension of school activities into the community through service learning, community problem solving or community service brings new energy into surrounding neighborhoods.

Eleven studies listed findings specifically related to community impact:

- **Increased community knowledge and improved perception of initiative**
  (Children's Aid Society; Communities In Schools; Hamilton County Families and Children First; Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Program; Project Success; Readiness to Learn; Schools Uniting Neighborhoods)

- **Increased community use of school buildings, more family awareness of community agencies, and greater community access to facilities previously unknown or unaffordable**
  (Center for School Change Initiative; Hamilton County Families and Children First; Polk Bros. Full Service School Initiative; Project Success; Readiness to Learn; Schools Uniting Neighborhoods; Urban School Initiative School Age Child Care Project)

- **Improved security and safety in surrounding area**
  (New York City Beacons; Urban School Initiative School Age Child Care Project)

- **Strengthened community pride and identity, engagement of citizens and students in school and community service**
  (Center for School Change Initiative; New York City Beacons)

While only 11 evaluations directly examined community impact, their findings suggest that community schools play a powerful role in community building. Initiatives point to an increase in community identity and pride and greater connections among young people and residents in community-focused projects.

Benefits that result from such changes are hard to quantify. How do you measure, for example, how important it is to a young person to feel part of something valuable? What is the combined contribution of cohorts of individual young people who have learned to care about their neighbors? Where is the tipping point, when a thousand small changes add up to measurable differences in outcomes for a community and the families that live there? We may not yet have the tools to measure these changes, but there is more than enough information to suggest that such changes are significant and far reaching.

Lessons for Implementation

The evaluations reviewed in this chapter confirm that community schools are making a difference to young people, families, schools and communities. Evaluation research is important because it lets practitioners know what they are accomplishing. It also can point the way to stronger, more effective implementation by highlighting the elements that contribute most to program success.

Three lessons emerge from this review of community school evaluations. Briefly summarized, they suggest that in successful community school initiatives:

- Quality counts
- Attendance matters
- Everyone benefits — the neediest most of all

Lesson #1: Quality Counts

The quality of community school initiatives has a significant impact on outcomes.

Several evaluations emphasized the importance of quality to an initiative's overall success. Suggested indicators of quality included the number and kind of activities, how long the program had been in operation, and the degree of student participation.

The evaluation design for the New York City Beacons model, for example, looked intensively at several sites, making sure that at least one site offered a superior set of activities. Evaluators found that the quality of youth development activities offered to young people makes a distinct difference in their outcomes. In higher-quality Beacons centers, for example, young people were more likely to report feeling better about themselves and to believe that all races and ethnicities were equally valued at their Beacons center. These students also reported fewer negative behaviors.

Similarly, the protocol for Project Success was based on the assumption that measurable improvements in attendance and achievement will occur only in well-established initiatives — those that have had an opportunity to mature and become accepted within the school and community. Evaluation findings supported this assumption: Parent involvement was rated highest at

schools that had been involved in Project Success for the longest time. Parents who participated in schools with the most experience with Project Success also reported the highest number of benefits to themselves and their children. In schools involved with Project Success for at least three years, Project Success students had much higher standardized test scores in reading in both third and sixth grades. While attendance rates were not affected by the length of school involvement in Project Success, this was because attendance at both study sites and comparison schools was already high, in the low to mid 90th percentile.

Findings for the LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program were linked to student participation rates — another indicator of quality. Results showed that "higher levels of participation ... led to better subsequent school attendance, which in turn related to higher academic achievement on standardized tests of mathematics, reading and language arts." UCLA researchers concluded that an intense commitment and day-in day-out involvement on the part of young people and families are necessary to achieve significant outcomes.

Lesson #2: Attendance Matters

Higher attendance in community schools contributes to improved achievement. Children in community schools want to come to school, and so they learn more.

Positive attendance outcomes were reported in several evaluations. There is a logical conceptual path between increased attendance and higher achievement; indeed, research confirms that students who attend school more often also perform better academically (Johnston, 2000). The factors that lead to increased attendance and that mediate the distance between the two outcomes are not entirely clear. Evaluations presented here suggest that strong personal motivation is essential and appears to be encouraged by both need and interest.

In the Urban School Initiative School Age Child Care Project, attendance and achievement both increased. Eighth-grade participants who were not in the program during the previous year reduced their average number of school absences from 18 days in seventh grade to five days in eighth grade. Program attendance was consistently above 90%. Evaluators of this program also found exceptional performance among participants in state proficiency exams. Scores of fourth- and sixth-grade participants exceeded statewide averages in every subject area, including reading, writing, math and science. Fourth graders exceeded their peers by 13 points in reading. Evaluators noted a variety of factors that no doubt contributed to positive attendance and achievement outcomes — for example, offering students a choice of activities every day. Evaluators attached particular importance to the meal or snack provided at every site. According to observers, "providing food for hungry bodies" acted as a "magnet that ... helped to boost attendance."

Evaluation of LA's BEST referred to another sort of intrinsic motivation. Attendance increases, evaluators theorized, because its programs are more "relevant and attractive" than the alternatives. Simply put, it appears that students came to school because they did not want to miss out on the activities LA's BEST offered. Academic performance increased because of the joint effects of more time in school and the enrichment resulting from participation in LA's BEST activities.

Lesson #3: Everyone Benefits — the Neediest Most of All

Students in the greatest need — those most likely to be in low-performing schools — benefit the most from the community schools environment. Community schools that reach out to low-income and underachieving students can begin to narrow the performance gap among student groups and across schools.

Evaluation data from the Texas Alliance Schools and California's Healthy Start both report that the most significant improvements in academic performance were seen among participants from the lowest-income families. In the 84 Alliance Schools, pass rates on the state's proficiency exam improved at a greater rate among economically disadvantaged students than in the total Alliance School student population. Disadvantaged Alliance School students improved at double the statewide rate for all students.

In California, academic results for low-income Healthy Start students most in need of services increased

significantly. Math scores in the lowest-performing elementary schools increased by 50% while reading scores climbed 25%.

Findings from the Readiness to Learn initiative suggest that the impact of community schools is greatest in the specific areas where students need assistance most. Researchers found that students at all grade levels referred to the program for academic reasons showed greater gains in academic performance than students who were referred for other reasons. Similarly, elementary students referred for behavioral problems experienced a greater decrease in their office referrals, detentions or suspensions than did students who had been referred for other reasons. All students improved, but not as much as students with greater need. In other words, targeting services and supports to students in need is an effective strategy to improve results.

Conclusion

There is much more we need to understand about how relationships among various approaches actually play out in community school initiatives. Identifying individual outcomes, while important, provides only clues about how positive results are achieved.

All too often, funders expect sophisticated outcome evaluations, but overlook the resources and capacity needed to conduct them. Few programs have the capacity to track individual outcomes.

Leading researchers consistently urge funding support for evaluations that focus on program quality rather than on individual outcomes. In a recent comprehensive review of community programs that promote youth development, the NRC and the Institute of Medicine argue that:

> Indicators of the developmental quality of the program necessarily provide the key information for judging whether it is likely to have positive effects on youth development. If the program's model is valid and data on the developmental quality of its activities indicate that it provides a setting and a set of activities that facilitate positive youth development, one may reasonably conclude that the program contributes to positive youth development (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002, p. 251).

Clearly, more resources need to be invested in community school research both to refine evaluation methodologies and to enable a better understanding of the factors at play in high-quality community schools. Only when we better understand these intricacies will we be able to target efforts to expand and sustain their effects.

Throughout this report, vignettes of community schools suggest some of the connections between quality and outcomes. They show what the research findings reported in Chapters 2 and 3 look like in action and illustrate the real difference that a living, breathing community school can make on everyone who walks through its doors.

Notes on Methods and Technical Limitations

Findings reported here come from formal studies conducted by third-party researchers using process and outcome designs and from community school initiatives using internal reports of program and school data. A few incorporate a longitudinal design. All the evaluations looked, though in different ways, at the impact of a specific community school initiative on children, families, schools or communities. A number of the evaluations also examined operational issues, such as participation and use rates. Surveys, interviews, focus groups, and program and school data were widely used to gather information.

Formal evaluations of some models measured impact by comparing findings from selected community school study sites to similar noncommunity schools. This methodology was used for evaluations of Bridges to Success, Children's Aid Society, Hamilton County Families and Children First, New York City Beacons, Polk Bros. Full Service School Initiative, Project Success, Schools of the 21st Century, and Schools Uniting Neighborhoods. Other evaluations compared participants to nonparticipants on various dimensions or looked at how individual measures changed before and after participation in the initiative. For example, the Texas Alliance Initiative used internal audits to assess changes in academic achievement by comparing testing performance in Alliance Schools with statewide averages.

Communities In Schools addressed the predictable variation among local sites by establishing general outcome measures, such as academic improvement, and asking localities to track participating students on those measures, regardless of differences in the types of assessments used.

Various evaluations noted limitations in implementing their design or drawing conclusions from their findings. For example, the difference between comparison and study sites in the Children's Aid Society evaluation evaporated when a comparison school became a community school. The number of potential comparison sites available to the New York City Beacons evaluation shrank considerably when 40 additional schools received funding to develop their own Beacons centers. When signed parent consent forms were required of every survey participant at comparison schools, evaluators had to limit the use of comparison schools to one substudy, given limited time and resources.

Initiatives also recognized the difficulty of drawing conclusions based on sites that differed significantly in the duration, quality and kind of activities they provided. Assuming that positive outcomes could be expected only in well-established sites, Project Success evaluators put significant effort into identifying "high-implementing" sites. These were identified in principal surveys as operating at a school for at least two years and demonstrating high levels of school implementation. Beacons center designers developed a stratified random sample to make sure at least one "exemplary" site was included in their intensive study sample. The process enabled evaluators to look at the difference between greater- and lesser-quality sites. It did not, however, produce a sample comprising sites equally strong in each of the initiatives' four major areas of activity: youth development, education, parent involvement and community building (Warren, Brown and Freudenberg, 1999). This limitation made it difficult to look at the significance of differences in program quality across all four areas.

Several evaluations took pains to note that no *causal* links could be inferred from findings between initiative activities and observed improvement, particularly the Polk Bros. Full Service School Initiative. The LA's BEST evaluation observed that "present data do not allow us to separate out the impact of LA's BEST from that of a regular school, or to determine which of the ... activities are most effective," but they also said that "it looks as if LA's BEST is a program that, when followed as a regular part of students' broad educational experience, results in statistically important differences in student outcomes" (Huang, et al., 2000). This problem of causality arises, suggests *Children's Aid Society evaluators, from a* model that is not fully defined in terms of the specific student outcomes expected "as the direct result of either participation in specific activities or services or as a result of immersion in a new type of education institution."

Researchers themselves note that results, particularly for academic achievement gains, though clearly evident, are still early. California's Healthy Start evaluation, for example, uses a longitudinal design; first-year results are intended to establish a baseline from which to measure subsequent change. Other researchers assumed that subsequent evaluations will be needed to tease out the interactions among program elements and outcomes and that the relationships, both positive and negative, will be more evident as initiatives mature.

There is much more that needs to be learned about *how* community schools make the difference to children, families, schools and communities. That they *do* make the difference is affirmed by the best available evaluation research — and confirmed daily by the experience and conviction of participants and observers.

Chapter 4

From Research to Practice

"It is simply impossible to have an island of educational excellence in a sea of community indifference."

— Ernest Boyer
former president of the Carnegie Foundation
for the Advancement of Teaching, 1995

Visitors to a community school quickly realize that it is a place designed to make learning happen. Students and teachers come to their classrooms motivated and engaged. Thanks to the array of services and supports available, young people are ready to learn and have the opportunity to develop to their fullest capacity. Parents and community partners are actively engaged in the school and help it function at its best. With a variety of adult classes and services available, family members and community residents are learning too.

Supported by clear evidence that community schools can and do make a difference in student achievement and other important measures, a growing number of communities and school systems are working together to realize this vision in their schools for their own students, their families and the entire community. But successful community schools are built on more than good intentions or even good models. They also have an effective infrastructure of leadership, organization and support that extends beyond what is seen in most traditional schools.

This chapter outlines four key elements that undergird successful local efforts to create and sustain community schools:

- **A motivating vision that describes how community schools can promote learning.**
- **Connected learning experiences in which in-class curriculum and instruction and out-of-class learning activities are coordinated to build complementary and reinforcing skills and abilities.**
- **Community partnerships that exponentially increase the resources, support and expertise available to community schools.**
- **Strategic organization and financing approaches that encourage effective working relationships between a school and its community partners, a results-oriented focus, and financial support for community school activities.**

Together and individually, these elements enable community schools to turn the vision into reality — using their inherent advantages to create the conditions for learning that enable all students to achieve at their full potential. Vignettes throughout this chapter illustrate how each element plays out in a community school.

A Motivating Vision

For a community school, a successful motivating vision is sharply defined, and includes a clearly articulated purpose and statement of desired results. Vision-guided community schools make decisions based on specific educational and ethical principles and clear assessment information. A clearly stated mission provides the school with the institutional integrity it needs to motivate members and reconcile diverse interests (Hill, Foster and Gendler, 1990).

A well-defined vision, with a mission and a plan for coordinated activities, can mean the difference between success and failure, especially in schools with multiple partners and reform efforts. It helps partners stay focused on learning, guides their day-to-day relationships and decision making, and encourages accountability. A shared vision also sends a signal to all stakeholders that student

learning is a top priority; helps mobilize the assets of school, family and community toward that goal; and captures the hearts and minds of those working toward it. Strong school and community leadership are vital to crafting such a vision and bringing it to life.

Chapter 1 described the Coalition's vision of community schools — a vision that is reflected in the work of communities and schools across the country. It is up to every school district, every school and every community, acting in concert, to develop the themes and issues that will inspire partners, encourage dialogue and focus action on this vision.

Vision Vignette: Relationships and Reading

At **Howe Elementary School** in Green Bay, WI, Principal Ed Dorff spells out the school's central vision: "Relationships and reading are the two most important things we do here. When kids come from families where education is not a priority ... the most important thing we can do to increase achievement is to help them develop relationships with their own family, with their school, and between their school and family."

Eighty-six percent of Howe students come from low-income families and many live in seven nearby homeless centers. Every year, nearly 30% of students move sometime during the school year. In order to build relationships and encourage stability, Howe now offers both Head Start classes and full-day, high-quality child care for working families; this means that home-school relationships start early. A host of research-based academic-, literacy- and family-support opportunities all are focused on improving student performance.

Transience is still high at the school and test scores still fluctuate, but the overall academic trend is moving upward. Sixty-one percent of third graders now perform at proficient or advanced levels on state reading tests, compared to 40% in 1997. Reading scores among fourth graders have improved from 35% to 58%.

Vision Vignette: Learning as a Full-Time Activity

Marquette Elementary School in Southwest Chicago has 2,100 students in kindergarten through eighth grade. By allowing community-based organizations to use school facilities, the school encourages the neighborhood to see it as a community resource and see learning as a full-time activity. This vision was greatly expanded in 1996, when the school, in partnership with Metropolitan Family Services (MFS), received a Polk Bros. Foundation Full Service School grant to help address student and family needs and provide extended opportunities for learning.

Marquette's partnership with MFS has increased the school's understanding of students' needs and helped break down barriers between teachers and students. Parents feel more comfortable knowing that the school is open and that their children are safe and actively involved.

According to Full Service School Director Lori Rios, "the full-service component of Marquette has helped teachers to look at the student as a whole, not only supporting academic needs, but also recognizing how recreation and other interests are important. It all comes full circle. And we've seen an attitude change in the students who now look at the school in a different light."

While the poverty rate among students has gone from 68% to 96% over the last decade, reading scores at Marquette actually increased at rates that exceeded the citywide average.

Connected Learning Experiences

Successful community schools link the community school vision to the classroom and other real world settings by providing curriculum, instruction and related activities that broaden and connect young people's learning experiences in and out of school.

These connected learning experiences include the following characteristics:

- clearly stated learning standards;
- communication and joint planning among school and community partners;
- alignment of learning opportunities with standards;
- a focus on research related to the conditions for learning; and
- professional development and technical assistance.

When learning experiences are connected, opportunities to practice specific skills and master content are incorporated in complementary learning settings, before and after school — in the community as well as in the classroom. What children are expected to learn remains constant, but how and where they acquire essential knowledge and skills can vary widely. Such an "embedded curriculum" offers a scope of activities consciously designed to build a range of both academic and life skills (McLaughlin, 2000).

Creating this kind of coherence begins with clearly articulated learning standards. There also must be continuing communication among school and community partners in order to find the best ways to connect activities with curriculum goals.

Research presented in Chapter 2 makes clear that learning occurs best when knowledge and skills are practiced and used to solve real-life problems. Community schools make certain that such learning opportunities are aligned with education standards and contribute to students achieving at high levels.

In designing connected learning experiences, partners are consistently guided by the research findings on which the five conditions for learning are based. Ongoing professional development and technical assistance help ensure that research-based strategies are implemented effectively. Communication and joint planning sessions among educators, youth development workers and community adults who serve as teachers outside the classroom help develop a repertoire of complementary instructional approaches.

Connected Learning Vignette:
A "Living Textbook" for Science

North Middle School in Aurora, CO, benefits in many ways from a partnership with the City of Aurora's Office of Youth Development and the Service-Learning Division of the Community College of Aurora. At the school, after-school programming is integrated into the whole-school curriculum, and science offers an important connecting strategy.

The Summer Science Academy, operated in partnership with the nearby University of Colorado's Health Science Center and hospital, offers students opportunities to explore anatomy, health/wellness, astronomy and geology. Other activities, such as swimming, art, computers and fitness, are integrated into the educational themes of the week. For example, students in the computer class are introduced to anatomy by working on the Visible Human Project, a computerized human dissection program. Interactive and hands-on classes at Denver's Nature and Science Museum, fossil digs at the local state park, and scavenger hunts designed to teach about nutrition and wellness all deepen young people's understanding of key scientific concepts.

North Middle School students who participate in after-school or summer programs like the Science Academy have higher attendance and are less likely to fail in their school work than students who do not participate.

Connected Learning Vignette:
Real-World Skills and Day-to-Day Needs

At **East Hartford High School** in East Hartford, CT, students come from more than 70 countries and speak 40 languages. Mobility is high and 60% of students come from low-income families.

"Students need to see a connection to the real world," says former principal Steve Edwards. East Hartford has built a curriculum around connected learning experiences by working with multiple community partners. Young people gain real-life training and skills through a variety of community-based and entrepreneurial learning activities. For example, selected students operate a branch office of a local bank located at the school, managing accounts for their peers and teachers.

Partners also have developed programs targeted to the needs of the student population. These programs include a student assistance center that offers comprehensive social and behavioral services, a primary care health center, a wellness center that promotes integrated physical well-being, and after-school programming.

Combined effects of these strategies are heartening. Over the last six years, the dropout rate has decreased from 22% to less than 2% annually. Eighty percent of the graduates go on to at least a two-year college — a 20% increase over the last seven years.

Community Partnerships

Community schools illustrate what can happen when the forces of community triumph over indifference. Through strategic partnerships, the capacity of the community and its schools expands. As results improve for students, families and the community, these relationships deepen.

Effective community partnerships include:

- a multisector alliance at the community level;
- an effective planning and decision-making mechanism at the school site;
- focusing the school and partners on shared results; and
- continuous learning among partners.

Under the pressure of new high-stakes achievement tests, schools sometimes are reluctant to enter into collaboration unless the effort is directly related to academic achievement (Cornerstone Consulting Group, 2001). Results and vignettes in this study clearly show, however, that when schools intentionally integrate their assets with those of parents; community-based organizations; public and private agencies; and business, civic and faith-based communities to create all the conditions for learning, they significantly expand the resources they need to reach all children. According to the U.S. Department of Education, "Developing strong partnerships among school, families, businesses, and community and religious groups is the best way to make our education system thrive" (U.S. Department of Education, 1999).

Partnerships are essential to developing a sufficient range of programs, services and resources that will achieve desired results. Engaged partners, strategically organized at the school site, in the community and in the school district, drive the work of community schools and help ensure responsiveness and accountability. Their leadership creates access to a range of community assets. It also provides new expertise and perspective and can introduce approaches that improve program effectiveness and efficiency.

Partnership Vignette: Developing a Broad Base

A Beacons Center operates at the **Webster Open Magnet School** under the Minneapolis YMCA's leadership. The YMCA-Webster partnership offers after-school academic enrichment and youth development opportunities; leadership development experiences; and peer tutoring to Hmong, African American and Latino families at the school. Minneapolis Public Schools granted permission to extend the Beacons summer-school day to enable every student one hour of Beacons activities, e.g., team building, youth leadership, community service, peer mentoring, cultural activities or recreation.

The YMCA also engages numerous other partners under its umbrella. Beacons Site Coordinator Matt Kjorstad says, "We use the strengths of each partner to give our youth and community the best resources possible." For example:

- The Best Friends program helps fourth- through eighth-grade girls meet new friends and build a community. Participants also learn about themselves and their changing bodies, and learn skills they need to succeed as women in the inner city.
- *La Oportunidad* offers two Latino cultural programs and is a key part of the Beacons' success with its Latino students as well as with their families.
- A partnership with the Macro Group, a nearby computer company, grew from Beacons' involvement in a business leaders meeting convened by the mayor and police chief. Here, the CEO of Macro offered financial assistance, a pen pal program and a "master gardener" for a community gardening program.

The Beacons advisory components strengthen their work. A youth advisory includes students involved with Beacons for at least three years who learn about all programs, help make changes, and give tours to potential funders and visitors. They hold an adult/youth joint meeting quarterly.

The staff advisory, which includes the principal, teachers, administrators and Beacons staff, meets

semi-annually at the citywide Beacons planning meeting to set new goals and strategies for the Webster Beacons. The parent advisory works hard to involve many parents as volunteers and in open houses, regular parent nights and talent shows. These advisories make the Beacons not the YMCA's program nor the Webster School's program, but the community's program.

Partnership Vignette:
Setting Community Priorities

For more than 20 years, **Northeast Elementary School** in Ankeny, IA, has been one of 10 district schools that follow a Community Education model. The approach calls for collaboration with community-serving organizations, religious groups, the school district, the city and public agencies to provide a wealth of learning experiences for the entire community.

To ensure that Community Education schools respond to actual local needs, community leaders hold a citizens planning conference every three years. Citizens agree on the top three priorities for action and decide on the resources needed to address them, the partnerships that need to be created and the results that will spell success.

Ankeny's centrally located Community Resource Center is one result of this communitywide planning. At the center, partners provide after-school ESL tutoring, a clothing center and food pantry, an alternative education program, a senior center, a computer center, counseling agencies, and a Children's Hospital health clinic. Bringing Women, Infants and Children (WIC), a federal feeding program for mothers and children, into the center increased the number of low-income mothers using the center's services from 26 to 260 the first year.

Partnership Vignette:
Time for Learning

Elliott Elementary School in Lincoln, NE, is a high-poverty school with a fast-growing immigrant population. An alliance with the Lincoln YMCA has made the school a welcoming place for children and adults.

Serving nearly 100 students a day, the YMCA brings in recreation, character development programs, academic support and positive supervision for children before and after school as well as during holiday breaks.

YMCA staff also participate in school leadership team and regular staff training sessions. At the teachers' request, YMCA staff provided them with extra literacy tutoring and training on positive techniques for classroom management. In turn, school staff trained reading tutors, including YMCA personnel and college students, on the school's reading methods.

Collaboration has created consistent expectations and "a feeling of continuous learning between day classes and after-school programs, rather than fragmented programming," says Principal DeAnn Currin. "We're all here to serve the children. Together we have made more time for learning." Teachers report an increase of 15 to 45 minutes of instructional time per day because of the more positive classroom management techniques the YMCA staff has helped them learn.

Citywide partnerships also are being developed. As part of city efforts to expand the community learning center initiative, of which Elliott is a part, leaders have established a community leadership council to guide the development and long-term financing of learning centers in Lincoln's neediest schools. The publisher of the local newspaper, who also serves as chair of the Lincoln Public Schools Foundation, spearheads this effort in partnership with the mayor, the school superintendent, county leaders, and local business and foundation executives.

Partnership Vignette:
Communitywide Leadership

The **Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) Initiative** in Multnomah County, OR, partners with 19 elementary, middle and high schools to extend the school day and develop schools as full-service neighborhood "community centers." The initiative grew from existing efforts in the City of Portland and Multnomah County, including a city parks and recreation after-school program and a county school-based social and health services program.

Interest in the project increased after a statewide Council of Chief State School Officers initiative brought representatives from the Children's Aid Society to Oregon. The representatives shared with elected officials the success story of their Washington Heights community

school model, which helped to spur Portland's interest in the link between social services and academic achievement.

As momentum built, two efforts emerged in 1998 that shared common ground. A multijurisdictional after-school cabinet, supported by a city commissioner and an assistant school superintendent, developed principles to improve academic achievement through community-based, family-centered strategies linked to the school day. The other effort, an *ad hoc* planning committee of the county community building initiative, focused on integrating social services at the neighborhood level with increased community involvement. These efforts connected through the sponsor group, a policy board for the *ad hoc* committee that included key county commissioners and the city commissioner involved with the after-school cabinet.

The *ad hoc* planning committee functioned as "a broad design group" to transform schools into community hubs. Membership grew to 35 people, representing social service and youth development agencies, school districts, businesses, and the local government. In April 1999, the sponsor group adopted the principles developed by both the after-school cabinet and the *ad hoc* committee, and the SUN initiative (named by the county youth advisory board) was born. SUN continues to benefit from high-level community support, while a multijurisdictional management team of senior staff from partner organizations oversees operations.

Strategic Organization and Financing

Successful community schools have the organizational arrangements and financing to manage the work of schools and their partners effectively and to achieve their shared goals. Effective organization and financing strategies include:

- flexible funding;
- a community schools coordinator;
- schools and all community partners who are willing to share resources;
- a source of technical assistance; and
- adequate and accessible facilities.

Community schools need sustainable sources of funding that support their broad organizational and operational needs, ensure program continuity, and attract new partners. Funding should be sufficiently flexible so that partners can respond quickly to urgent priorities and use dollars creatively to leverage additional income. Valuable support also may come in the form of technical assistance to help partners work through a range of planning and implementation issues.

Providing for a community school coordinator should be a high priority for most community schools. A permanent staff coordinator contributes significantly to the effectiveness and sustainability of the program. Working as part of the school leadership team, the coordinator facilitates collaboration, community oversight and day-to-day management of community school activities. The coordinator also can greatly improve the range, quality and coherence of community school activities while increasing the time the principal and other school staff can devote to instruction and learning. The coordinator can be financed through school funds, other public or private dollars, or a combination of these options. Alternatively, a partner might relocate an existing staff person to the school to serve as the coordinator.

Effective community schools also pursue creative strategies to house services in adequate and accessible facilities. Increasingly, this means advocating for state and local policies that permit construction of mixed-use buildings to serve as community centers as well as schools, and preserving older school with strong community roots.

Organization Vignette:
Technical Assistance

When the Polk Bros. Foundation organized its Full Services School Initiative (FSSI) in Chicago, it engaged the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) to provide ongoing technical assistance. NCREL offered assistance at each individual school and coordinated a learning network of people from each of the three FSSI participating schools, including **Marquette Elementary School**.

Among other valuable services, the technical assistance provider reminded oversight committee members that it was important to involve all the major stakeholder

groups (parents, students, teachers, administrators and staff of community-based organizations) in key decisions. This helped the committee to ensure stakeholders' buy-in, benefit from their experience and wisdom, and avoid making costly mistakes.

Commenting on the value of the technical assistance, Suzanne Doornos Kerbow of the Polk Bros. Foundation says that it "helped us work through the differences between the schools and the lead community-based organizations, develop quality services, and establish a learning network that was critical to the entire enterprise."

Organization Vignette:
On-Site Coordination

Terrie Lewis, the Communities In Schools site coordinator at **East Elementary School** in Kings Mountain, NC, leads community outreach efforts to expand the school's partnerships and resources. She also provides direct assistance to the teachers by facilitating trusting relationships with families and helping teachers implement new literacy programs. On a daily basis, she organizes the work of partners and a host of volunteers who provide tutoring and homework help to students, serve as aides in the classroom, and help needy students obtain school supplies and other essential items.

In the words of Principal Jerry Hoyle, the presence of a full-time coordinator on campus who coordinates parent volunteers, mentors and lunch buddies, manages business and church partnerships, and performs similar organizational duties "has allowed teachers to get back to teaching."

Financing Vignette:
Extra Supports

Six years ago, the leadership at **Carson High School** in Carson, CA, decided that test scores were not going to improve without extra supports to address health and social service issues.

To begin the process of putting needed supports in place, the school obtained an initial Healthy Start grant from the California State Department of Education. Los Angeles Unified School District's LEA Medi-Cal Reimbursement Program helped sustain the program, while a state-funded Immediate Intervention for Under-Performing Schools grant provided for a learning support coordinator to work in unison with the Healthy Start program.

Community-based coalitions also support programming at the school. Carson 2000Plus, a local resource coordinating council, brings resources to bear in several areas, including after-school activities, health services, parent involvement, conflict resolution and school-to-career transition. Suspensions and dropout rates have improved substantially over the last several years, while the percentage of 11th graders scoring at or above the 50th percentile in standardized reading tests increased from 19% in 1999 to 25% in 2001.

Financing Vignette:
Resources for a Small School

Families on Track (FOT) is an academy of sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students housed within **Parkway Heights Middle School** in South San Francisco, CA. It is designed to provide smaller learning environments and comprehensive child and family support services.

During FOT's planning stages, strong support from the president of the county board of supervisors promoted an unprecedented collaboration between the county, the city of South San Francisco and the South San Francisco School District. Using funds from their respective Community Development Block grants, the city and county pooled their resources to fund the purchase of a new 1,500-square-foot portable building on Parkway's campus to house all of FOT's social services. Another building to provide more space currently is being planned.

FOT operates as a separate nonprofit organization with its own board of directors. The steering committee, whose members include representatives from the city, county, school district and community-based organizations, guides the program. The board of directors provides community leadership and obtains funding while the FOT executive director and the Parkway Heights principal provide day-to-day academic management. Although incoming sixth-grade FOT students have lower overall GPAs than non-FOT students, by seventh grade this gap is significantly reduced.

Conclusion

As educators and community partners pursue their visions of successful community schools, they are moving well beyond business as usual. Schools, families and community partners are agreeing on common results, jointly seeking funding, transforming their attitudes and expectations, and working creatively and respectfully with each other to create a different kind of institution.

As we have seen, community schools nationwide are accomplishing more and doing it better by taking a comprehensive approach to strengthening children, youth, families and communities. Openness to innovation and access to additional resources and expertise are reflected in reinvigorated instruction and enthusiastic learning. These changes in practice and attitude have begun to transform every school in this report, and many others across the country.

Chapter 5

AN ACTION AGENDA

"Leaders unwilling to seek mutually workable arrangements with systems external to their own are not serving the long-term institutional interests of their constituents."

— John Gardner
On Leadership

As the research, evaluations and vignettes in this report clearly show, community schools are making the difference for many students, families, schools and communities. And with the support of community leaders, educators, policymakers, practitioners, students, parents, community residents and other institutions, this vision and approach to learning can make the difference for many more.

Organizing community schools requires the shared leadership, resources and effort of many different stakeholders. This action agenda speaks to everyone seeking better learning outcomes, as well as specifically to entities whose policies and practices must change in order to build an effective and lasting community schools strategy. The agenda is built around the four elements that help forge successful community schools: **a motivating vision, connected learning experiences, community partnerships, and strategic organization and financing.**

With these elements in place, community schools will have the tools they need to do what they do best: Create better learning opportunities for all students while strengthening families and communities.

A Motivating Vision

- **Engage the community.** Creating and sustaining community schools is a community enterprise. A community school strategy can begin with schools reaching out, communities reaching in or joint efforts. Regardless of how it begins, a wide array of stakeholders must be involved at both the building and district levels. Voices of young people, parents, families and community residents are especially important. Together, these stakeholders develop a broad vision of what their community schools should look like and the multiple measures of progress they expect to achieve. The conditions for learning discussed in Chapter 2 provide a valuable tool for thinking through what young people need to succeed in both school and life, and how their families and communities can be actively engaged in supporting student learning.

- **Use data to define desired results and drive decision making.** School staff, parents, community leaders, and partner agencies and organizations should review available data to determine which conditions for learning are in place, the changes that need to be made and the expectations that may reasonably be set. In addition to academic performance, consider such factors as attendance; student behavior; social, emotional and physical well-being; family well-being and family involvement; and access to developmental opportunities outside the school day. Do not overlook the many "facts of life" (e.g., student mobility, violence, housing) that influence teaching and learning. Carefully review the accountability systems being developed by local school districts as well as the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act in this process. Analyze the data, set realistic priorities and develop a plan of action to achieve them.

- **Keep schools open before and after the regular school day and on weekends all year long.** Keeping schools open is not only an

essential element of a community school, it also provides taxpayers with an effective way to see the value of their investment in schools and students. Put simply, school buildings belong to the community.

While issues related to use of facilities, utility costs, insurance and custodial services will probably need to be addressed, schools and communities usually can work through these concerns. Joint efforts by school boards, the local government, superintendents and principals, teachers, and community agencies are an effective approach.

- **Build and rehabilitate school buildings as community schools.** The present boom in school rehabilitation and construction offers a unique opportunity to create community schools. Communities should think of planned buildings not just as schools, but as centers of community life. Older schools with historical value, which already may be centers of the community, should be rehabilitated. School districts; the local government; and community groups with the expertise to engage students, parents and residents should work together to envision multiple purposes for these buildings, the services and opportunities they want to make available, and the kinds of space needed.

- **Build small schools.** The research on the benefits of small schools is clear. Still, schools with thousands of children exist at the elementary school level and are common among high schools. Once considered cost effective, these oversized schools have failed to demonstrate any real savings and offer few economies of scale to the children attending them. New schools should be designed for small student populations shown by research to be optimum for learning. Existing schools can be reconfigured to provide more effective learning communities

In addition, school boards and superintendents should consider creating small schools in existing community facilities where the community can support student learning — at colleges and universities, museums, business sites, or hospitals. All of these approaches can mobilize the community in support of student learning and engage the public in public education.

Connected Learning Experiences

- **Incorporate the community into the curriculum as an explicit resource for learning and improved student achievement.** Research demonstrates the effectiveness of curricular approaches that use the community as a resource for learning and that enable young people to become resources for their communities. Experience demonstrates that such approaches can be readily aligned to state standards.

Many stakeholders can contribute to this effort. For example,

- School systems can integrate community-based experiences in their curricula through school-to-work programs, service learning, place-based education, environmental education and other similar strategies.

- Local governments can work with educators to expand educational programs that address issues of concern to the city or county. For example, health and environmental issues such as water supply, sanitation, pest control or lead-based paint can provide the content for numerous engaging learning experiences.

- Institutions of higher education, in pursuit of their mission to build a more democratic society and educate students, can mobilize their faculties and students to design and implement joint curricula with K–12 students and teachers.

Such activities provide effective ways to address community problems and help students at all grade levels serve as resources for their communities. Community organizations, as well as civic, arts and cultural groups, have a significant capacity to

partner with K–12 community schools and help create exciting learning experiences.

- **Provide teachers and principals with professional development to enhance their ability to use the community as a learning resource.** Implementing new practices in any organization requires a substantial investment in professional development. This is especially important when using the community as a resource for learning, because educators typically have had little professional preparation in this area.

  Institutions of higher education can help fill this gap by seeing that prospective teachers, counselors and others have opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills to work with families and the community, tap community assets to support student learning, and understand how the school can be a resource to families and the community. *Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do* (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2001) and the *Interstate State School Leadership Consortium: Standards for School Leaders* (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996) include specific references to developing knowledge and skills in these areas, but they continue to receive short shrift.

  Superintendents and school administrators can devote more local professional development efforts to helping principals and teachers understand the assets of community and how to use the community as a resource for learning.

- **Integrate in-school and after-school learning experiences.** After-school programs increase the time young people spend in safe and supportive settings, enhancing their academic skills and developing nonacademic competencies to help them succeed in school and in life. Balancing these interests and connecting both academic and nonacademic skill building to in-school learning is the key to an effective after-school program.

  State education standards provide a framework for examining what children learn in school and after school. Independent groups that are deeply committed to youth development have created tools to assist local clubs in implementing activities that help students achieve at high standards *and* develop life skills. Others can do the same.

- **Draw on youth development resources and share expertise.** It is important that both in-school and after-school programs integrate the best of what we know about youth development with efforts to promote academic achievement and provide additional learning support. Dialogue among stakeholders in education, youth development and other kinds of community-based learning is essential so they understand each other's strategies and methods, focus their expertise on agreed-upon standards and competencies, and learn from one another's knowledge and experience.

  School districts should include a focus on youth development when preparing personnel to work with students in school and in after-school programs. Inviting staff of youth development organizations to participate in this training will strengthen the experience for both groups. Applying the principles of youth development in schools helps to create more child- and family-friendly, culturally competent learning environments.

  By the same token, youth development organizations should invite teachers and principals to participate with youth development staff in professional development opportunities focused on after-school programs. Together, they can align youth development principles and practices with standards for learning set by the school district.

Community Partnerships

- **Create broad-based, local coalitions to advance, develop and sustain community schools.** At the local level, a comprehensive system of community schools that links elementary, middle and high schools requires leadership

from a broad-based coalition of stakeholders. The purpose of such coalitions is to develop and promote a community school vision, mobilize resources, ensure accountability for results, keep the community informed, nurture partnerships and relationships, and build the capacity to sustain the effort.

Many collaboratives already involved in individual community schools, or working community-wide on other issues related to children and families, have the potential to move a comprehensive, communitywide strategy forward. In other instances, a new entity will be necessary.

- **Create site-based planning and decision-making teams.** At the building level, planning and decision-making teams that include families and residents, school staff, and community partners provide leadership for individual community schools. The purpose of such teams is to review data, assess existing programs, identify gaps in services, mobilize community resources, monitor progress toward results, and serve as a resource for parent and community engagement in the school. There is no one right way to develop these teams. In some instances, building on existing groups will work best; in others, new mechanisms will be necessary.

- **Engage students, parents, families and residents.** Every partner in a community school must fully support the strong involvement of students, parents, families and community residents in decisions affecting the work of the community school and in the oversight of its results. They also should help to develop parents' abilities to serve as strong advocates for their children's education, as role models for learning at home, and as leaders and participants in the programs and affairs of the community school. Leadership opportunities for young people should be incorporated in both in-school and out-of-school settings.

- **Focus all partners on creating the conditions for learning.** Many schools have partners. Not all of these partnerships, however, have a motivating vision and strategy to achieve the results they are seeking together. The five conditions for learning provide a useful framework for schools and their partners to think through how they can individually and collectively contribute to improved student learning and other school, family and community outcomes. If a potential partner is not able to demonstrate how their work will contribute to creating the conditions for learning, their participation — however well meant — may distract from the community school agenda.

- **Build sustainable partnerships.** Too often, relationships between schools and community partners are short-lived, existing only for the duration of a specific joint venture or grant. In community schools, however, partners understand they must stay the course to achieve better results. Schools, in turn, create welcoming environments that make their partners want to stay. With long-term, committed partnerships in place, it becomes easier to tap into a range of funding opportunities and to develop an attitude that says, "We're in this together."

- **Develop knowledge and understanding among partners and across disciplines.** Educators and their community partners should share resources to organize professional development opportunities for the staff of the community school. These experiences help partners learn about and understand one another's unique philosophies, expertise, policies and financial constraints. Partners can learn more about the school's neighborhood and constituencies through home visits, site visits to community-based organizations and tours of the area.

- **Create interprofessional learning opportunities in higher education.** Colleges and universities should increase both preservice and in-service

opportunities for interprofessional development across the fields of education, public health, mental health, social services, early childhood, youth development and related fields. These experiences enable people who address various areas of child and family well-being to learn about each other's disciplines as part of their ongoing professional education. Higher education institutions must sustain and deepen the promising efforts that have already been made in this direction.

Strategic Organization and Financing

- **Create community school coordinator positions.** A community school coordinator mobilizes and integrates school and community resources, improves the impact of these resources on student learning, and frees up the time of principals and teachers. Appointing the coordinator to the school leadership team demonstrates the importance of the role and increases its effectiveness.

  A coordinator can be an employee of a community-based organization, a public agency or a school district. Regardless of who hires and supervises the position, it can be paid for by multiple agencies and funding sources. For example:

  - **School systems** can create a coordinator's position within their personnel policies and identify the various funding streams (e.g., Title I, Middle School Safe and Drug Free Coordinators Program, 21st Century Community Learning Centers) that can be used for this purpose. Principals with discretion over funds at the school site also can also decide to use dollars for this purpose.

  - **Community-based organizations** can finance this position through various grant programs from public or private sources.

  - **City or county** partners may use their funds to help hire a coordinator or reposition staff to perform community school coordinator duties.

  - **The United Way and local philanthropies** can help underwrite these positions.

- **Identify the lead partner for a community school with great care.** Educators, of course, are major partners in a community school, but they need not always assume the lead role.

  There is a growing trend toward having a capable partner organization — for example, a child- and family-services agency, a youth development organization, a local government agency, a college or university, or a family support center — serve as the linchpin for a given community school. Working closely with the school, this lead organization is primarily responsible for mobilizing and integrating the resources of the community and the work of partners. This arrangement provides the school with an anchor in the community and enables principals and teachers to focus on teaching and learning.

  In some communities, however, the school itself will be better equipped to provide the necessary leadership and coordination to create a community school. It is important to be clear about the mission of the community school and to review the assets of the schools and potential community partners before selecting an organizational approach.

- **Organize school district funding streams to support a community schools strategy.** School systems have access to various public and private sources that provide supports and opportunities for students and their families outside of the core instructional programs. These dollars can help subsidize after-school activities and coordinated physical and mental health services — school nurses, student assistance programs, social workers and psychological services — as well as adult education, parenting education, family involvement, violence prevention and other services. Schools also receive funds for service learning, school-to-work programs, character education and other special programs with a primarily curricular focus.

Unfortunately, when these sources are funneled through the school system's central office, they often are maintained as individual, categorical funding streams. There may be little effort at the district level to identify or coordinate complementary funds. Community school partners must work assertively to make sure that appropriate funding streams are brought together at the school site to achieve the results that the community and schools are seeking.

School districts should rethink how these programs and services are organized at both the central office and school site levels. Bundling funding opportunities that support a community school strategy can go far toward creating the conditions for learning and attaining community schools' learning goals.

- **Organize other public funding streams to support community schools.** Local, state and federal governments also distribute funds that can be used to help create and sustain community schools. Cities have been very active in the after-school arena, for example. Many have health and human services departments. Counties in many states have even more direct responsibility for the planning, delivery or funding of a wide array of human services. States and the federal government finance at various levels nearly every program that might be imagined at a community school.

Local, state and federal governments can modify their funding policies to better support a community schools approach by:

- Defining common planning requirements across agencies for all programs operating at or in connection with schools.
- Creating joint strategies for using funds more flexibly across programs to achieve results related to student learning.
- Requiring that potential grantees demonstrate how proposed services will help create the conditions for learning and how their services will integrate with other related activities at or near the school.

For more information on how states can support community schools, please see *A Handbook for State Policymakers/Community Schools: Supporting Student Learning, Strengthening Schools, families and communities* at www.communityschools.org/handbook.pdf.

- **Organize private funding streams to support community schools.** The United Way, community foundations and other philanthropies support a variety of innovative services. In many instances, these organizations provide significant leadership in developing community schools. The business sector, too, provides funds, volunteers and technical support. Both for-profit and nonprofit funders have considerable ability to encourage school systems, along with local and state governments, to develop a community schools approach.
- **Develop joint financing strategies for school facilities.** School budgets alone may not be able to cover all the costs of creating comprehensive community school facilities. Local governments, however, can build libraries, recreation centers, health facilities, housing and other facilities as integral parts of a community school. Youth development organizations such as the Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCAs and YWCAs, and other community and human services organizations also rehabilitate and construct facilities. They have shown they are willing and able to share the costs.

Joint financing of facilities by school districts, the local government and community agencies also make it possible to keep small schools open and build new small schools. If the local government, youth development organizations, health and human services agencies, and others share the costs, small schools can educate children well and be cost-effective in terms of student results — and stewardship of public funds at the same time.

- **Work together for increased funding.** While more can be done to create community schools with existing resources, the present constraints on public and private funding streams, indeed the cutbacks that are occurring at various levels, cannot be overlooked. The cross-sector leadership structures forged to support community schools have the potential to serve as a new voice for necessary funding. Leaders should advocate for increased and stable financing of the programs and services needed at a community school, and for money to knit together these services in a community school.

- **Create technical assistance capacity to support the development of community schools.** Nearly all the schools and communities described in this report have received technical assistance from a local, state, regional or national resource. Often private funding has supported this technical assistance. Technical assistance has been of particular value in developing relationships among a school and its community partners — organizing coalitions at the community level, establishing site teams at the school, analyzing data and measuring progress, and identifying best practices.

  Despite the success of this approach, however, most technical assistance funding continues to focus on discrete, categorical programs rather than on comprehensive strategies like community schools. Policymakers should consider the advantages of coordinated approaches and develop technical assistance efforts that can better support them.

  Some communities have created intermediary organizations to support community schools. An intermediary is an organization chosen by a school and its community partners to offer technical assistance in developing the four key elements of a community school strategy.

  Typically, an intermediary works with a cross-sector coalition or commission that brings together an array of community stakeholders seeking to create multiple community schools. Intermediary functions can be carried out by local governments, a school district or an independent nonprofit organization. Various arrangements will work as long as there is a commitment to shared leadership and a shared vision among partners.

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Community School Profiles and Narrative Overviews

Profile: East Elementary School, Kings Mountain, North Carolina

Community School Model: Communities In Schools

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Jerry Hoyle, Principal
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Lorainne Edwards, CIS Site Coordinator

School Demographics

- Grades: K–5
- Enrollment: 340
- Geographic area: low-income rural
- Ethnic/racial composition: 72% white, 25% African American, 3% other
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 61%
- Limited English proficient: 1%
- Language spoken: English

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1992
- Partners: Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, Vision Service Plan, Lions Club, Successful Education Corporation, local churches, Eden Gardens nursing home
- On-site coordination/management: full-time on-site CIS coordinator, part-time CIS assistant coordinator, two AmeriCorps fellows
- Oversight/governance teams: School Improvement Team and PTO Executive Council
- Funding sources: Title I federal dollars, Kings Mountain School District, CIS, United Way, local church and business donations, PTO

Learning-Related Accomplishments and Outcomes

- Attendance is in the top 10% of the state.
- Narrowed the achievement gap between African American and white students performing at proficiency levels in reading and math to 10% compared to the state gap of 30%.
- Increased parent-teacher conference participation to over 96%.
- East was named one of the top 25 schools in the state for academic growth in 1999 and 2000.
- On average, 92% of all students are testing at grade level, with 100% of fifth graders performing at grade level. Before CIS entered the school in 1992, only about 45% to 50% of students performed at grade level.
- Named a School of Excellence by the state in 2000 and 2001 for having at least 90% of its students performing at grade level.
- East has been an Exemplary School for the past five years by increasing the number of students performing at grade level by 10% each year. It won recognition as a National Title I Distinguished School in 2001.
- For the past six years, East has won awards for school beautification.

East Elementary School Overview

Kings Mountain, NC, faces many of the same challenges as other rural communities in the state — working poor families, single mothers, few college-educated parents and a high unemployment rate. The poverty and instability in the community affected the school district and caused frustration for many parents and teachers. In response, the Kings Mountain School District launched a partnership with Communities In Schools (CIS) in 1992. Over the past decade, this partnership has helped turn

East Elementary School from a low-performing, under-resourced school into a state-recognized School of Excellence.

School district Title I dollars and the local United Way fund a full-time CIS coordinator and a part-time assistant. The staff, along with two AmeriCorps volunteers, created a Family Resource Center at East to mobilize services and supports needed by students and teachers. The center provides emergency clothing and food; develops partnerships to provide students with eye exams, glasses, dental care and school supplies; and recruits parent volunteers. CIS, along with the community, advocated for the county health department to open a clinic one mile from the school, making immunizations, medication and more serious referrals available without loss of school time for students or work time for parents. A Student Services Management Team, including the CIS coordinator, a mental health counselor from the health department, teachers, the school counselor, the school social worker and parents, meets the needs of children with behavioral or academic problems.

The principal, who has been at East for nine years, and a veteran teaching staff have strong camaraderie with CIS personnel, who school staff see as supporting their educational goals. CIS established a reading remediation program and trained teachers to use it. CIS also recruited lunchtime mentors from the business community. An after-school program offers a homework club, computer classes, incentive reading programs, Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts, and community outreach programs where students help others while enhancing their own learning. For example, fourth graders read to first graders weekly; students participating in a food drive incorporated math skills by graphing the daily results in class; and students in a Learn and Serve project organized a health fair and in the process improved their understanding of their own health as well as the availability of community services.

Community support also has increased. East has a strong Close the Gap Committee of school board members, parents, and nonprofit and church leaders working to reduce the achievement gap between African American and white children. The community and school have worked to improve the appearance of the school, recently building a playground on the school campus for the entire community.

Profile: Elliott Elementary School, Lincoln, Nebraska

Community School Model: Local initiative with YMCA as lead partner

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Lincoln, NE 68510
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DeAnn Currin, Principal
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Benjamin Zink, Community Learning Center Director
bzink@ymcalincoln.org

School Demographics

- Grades: K–6
- Enrollment: 450
- Geographic area: low-income urban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 49% white (includes new Americans from the Middle East and Europe), 25% black, 13% Asian, 11% Hispanic, 2% Native American
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 100%
- Limited English proficient: 30%
- Languages spoken: 26

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1993
- Partners: Lincoln YMCA, Lincoln Public School Foundation, NIFA, Con Agra, Bright Lights, Zoo, Neighborhoods Inc., Air National Guard, University of Nebraska, Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln Literacy Council, Southeast Community College, Lincoln Council on Alcohol and Drugs, YWCA, Girl Scouts, Lincoln Action Program, Asian Community and Cultural Center, Faces of the Middle East, Hispanic Community and Cultural Center, Lincoln Community Playhouse, Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department
- On-site coordination/management: principal, Elliott Community Learning Center; director, YMCA; program director and family resource coordinator, School Social Action Committee

- Oversight/governance teams: Lincoln Community Learning Centers Management Team, School Leadership Team, Lincoln Public School Foundation, School Neighborhood Advisory Community Council
- Funding sources: Lincoln YMCA, YMCA Partner with Youth Campaign, Lincoln Public Schools Foundation, Lincoln Community Foundation, Nebraska Investment Finance Authority, 21st Century Community Learning Center grant, Foundation for Educational Funding, Lincoln Downtown Optimist Club, Flexible Funding dollars, Title I federal funds, State Accountability Grant, ConAgra

Learning-Related Accomplishments and Outcomes

- Significant increases in the total reading and total math scores on the Metropolitan Achievement tests in second and fourth grades for the last two years.
- Teachers report they have gained between 15 and 45 minutes daily in instructional time due to implementation of positive behavioral supports.
- Parent surveys show increased satisfaction.
- Office referrals have gone from an average of five per day to an average of one per day in 2001.
- Sixty-seven and one-half percent of Elliott fourth graders were assessed in 2000–01 as proficient or advanced in reading and math, exceeding the 50% required by Title I to meet the Adequate Yearly Progress criterion and surpassing the 62.8% of students at all Title I schools meeting this mark.
- Sixty-three percent of students who used the Community Learning Center for at least 30 units of service over two years performed above the 50th percentile in math on the Metropolitan Achievement Test in 2001, increasing to 74% in 2002. For reading, percentages increased from 48% to 64%.
- Elliott's "Think Time" strategy reduced disruptions, escalating behavior and negative emotions within the classroom setting.
- The student mobility index has decreased from .399 to .375 from 2000 to 2001.

Elliott Elementary School Overview

Elliott Elementary School is a high-poverty school with a large immigrant population, due to an influx of refugees over the past 10 years. Elliott benefits from a full-time, on-site YMCA program director as well as an Elliott Community Learning Center (CLC) director. They jointly work with the family resource coordinator to connect families to the supports and services available in the school.

The alliance with the Lincoln YMCA has transformed Elliott into a welcoming place full of opportunities and enriching experiences for children and adults. Serving nearly 100 students a day, the YMCA offers recreation, character development programs, academic support and positive supervision for children before and after school as well as when school is out of session.

Monthly leadership team meetings and staff training sessions include all staff that work with children at school. These meetings led teachers to ask the YMCA to provide extra literacy tutoring and staff training on how to support positive classroom behavior. School staff also trains YMCA personnel, parents and college tutors on a new reading support program. Collaboration between the school and the YMCA has created consistent expectations and rules. The result has created "a feeling of continuous learning between day classes and after-school programs, rather than fragmented programming. We're all here to serve the children. Together we extend the learning," says Principal DeAnn Currin.

The CLC director brings in adult literacy and GED classes, homeowner education, and financial fitness classes. Health, dental and vision partnerships respond to many children's basic physical health needs. The Lincoln Literacy Council's Parent Project provides one-on-one English lessons to immigrant parents while teaching them how to get more involved with their children's education. Southeast Community College teaches Adult English as a Second Language classes. The Air National Guard brings in a science and math program, while the Girl Scouts and other community groups help with tutoring. "Providing these services helps to reduce mobility. We try to give communities of people a reason to stay," says Benjamin Zink, community learning center director.

The work at Elliot is part of a communitywide strategy jointly led by the Lincoln Public School Foundation and Lincoln Public Schools to create CLCs at 13 schools in the district.

Profile: Francis Scott Key Elementary School #103, Indianapolis, Indiana

Community School Model: United Way Bridges to Success

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Debbie Zipes, Bridges To Success Director
(317) 921-1283
zipes@uwci.org

School Demographics

- Grades: K–5
- Enrollment: 293
- Geographic area: low-income urban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 84% African American, 7.2% white, 5.5% multiracial, 3.4% Hispanic
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 85%
- Limited English proficient: none

Community School Operations:

- Initiated community school planning: 1996
- Partners: United Way of Central Indiana, Gallahue Mental Health Center, Dr. Jordan (dental), Boys and Girls Clubs of Indianapolis, Calvary Temple, Parent-Teacher Organization, Indiana Parks and Recreation, Password Community Mentoring, Community Hospital, Grassy Creek Health Center, Mayor's Office for After-School Programs, Federal Credit Union
- On-site coordination/management: principal, Boys and Girls Clubs coordinator, School-Community Site Team facilitated by Bridges to Success area school coordinator
- Oversight/governance teams: Bridges to Success Council and Urban After-School Coalition (obtains resources and advocates)
- Funding sources: Bridges to Success — United Way, Federal Class Size Reduction funds, Safe Haven state grant, Title I federal funds, Boys and Girls Clubs, Indiana Parks and Recreation, in-kind services from partners

Learning-Related Accomplishments and Outcomes

- In 2001, 73.2% of all third graders, including special education students, passed the Indiana Statewide Test for Educational Progress (ISTEP), up from 29.1% in 1998–99, which did not include students placed in special education.
- Performed "far above predicted" relative to comparable schools on the ISTEP categories of language expression, language mechanics and math computation and "above predicted" in math concepts and application, vocabulary, and reading comprehension in 2001–02.
- One hundred percent of fifth graders and kindergartners received immunization shots in 2001–02, up from 32% three years prior.
- Suspensions have dropped at least 50% since mental health services have been available at the school.

Francis Scott Key Elementary School #103 Overview

Children in Indianapolis's far east side faced a problem — limited safe or structured places to spend time outside of school hours. This lack of structure was affecting their performance on state tests; a problem confirmed by a community assessment conducted in 1998 by Bridges to Success (BTS), a community school partnership between the Indianapolis Public Schools and the United Way of Central Indiana.

To help fill the void, BTS and the mayor's office brought together the CEOs of the YMCA, Indiana Parks and Recreation, Boys and Girls Clubs of Indianapolis, and Community Centers of Indianapolis. These executives formed the Urban After-School Programs Coalition to address the service gap and to advocate for greater funding. As a first step, the Boys and Girls Clubs and the Parks Department pooled resources to fund a full-time coordinator to organize intensive tutoring after school for two months to prepare students for ISTEP. Their efforts paid off: Test scores jumped from 29% of students passing to 73% the first year.

Through the BTS process, the United Way provided $2,000 annually to support a School-Community team at Francis Scott Key that creates and leverages services

and supports at the school. This team consists of the principal, the BTS area school coordinator, teachers, a social worker, parents, residents, businesses, representatives from youth development organizations and other community partners.

In addition to the school-community team, BTS has a communitywide council that provides leadership for the initiative and focuses on results and sustainability. The BTS council and its partners work together to create systemwide resources for schools. Because of BTS, Francis Scott Key now has a full-time therapist and caseworker on-site to provide drug education, mental health counseling for children and families, hospital referrals, and transportation for health needs. A dental van gives teeth cleanings and a yearly checkup to all students who qualify. A local health center partnership enables 100% of kindergartners and fifth graders to complete their state required immunizations on time. The Boys and Girls Clubs afterschool program offers extra tutoring, conflict resolution and opportunities to make caring connections. BTS also helps Francis Scott Key students in need receive free vision services, school supplies and booster seats.

Initiated in 1991, BTS now works with 43 schools citywide. BTS has helped to form a new coalition of parent groups that is working to deepen parent engagement with BTS and the schools. The BTS process also helped to create collaborations among hospitals and mental health providers for school-based clinics and mental health services throughout the city.

Profile: Howe Elementary School, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Community School Model: James Comer Professional Development model and Ed Zigler's Schools of the 21st Century model (CoZi)

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Chris Dunbar, Family Resource Center Executive Director
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School Demographics

- Grades: PreK–5
- Enrollment: 510
- Geographic area: low-income urban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 36.5% white, 29% Hispanic, 14% African American, 11.5% Asian, 9% Native American
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 86%
- Limited English proficient: 40%
- Languages spoken: English, Spanish, Hmong

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1996
- Partners: St. Vincent's Hospital, Boys and Girls Clubs, Urban 4H, community businesses, Green Bay School District, Howe Family Resource Center, Brown County Literacy Council, Even Start, Brown County Extension (part of University of Wisconsin), American Health Advisory Center (dental provider)
- On-site coordination/management: team of principal and director of Family Resource Center, full-time Boys and Girls Clubs coordinator, core long-term faculty
- Oversight/governance teams: 25-member Howe Community Learning Council and Family Resource Advisory Board
- Funding sources: Title I federal funds, Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration grant, 21st Century Community Learning Center grant, Community Development Block grant, Federal Class Size Reduction funds, state funds, Even Start Federal grant, Green Bay School District, Cornerstone Foundation grant, Federal McKinny Homeless Act Fund, Gannett Newspaper Foundation, private fundraising, corporate grants and gifts

Learning-Related Outcomes and Accomplishments

- Prior to 1997, less than 40% of kindergartners met the kindergarten screening guidelines. In 2002, teachers reported that between 80% and 90% of Howe Head Start preschoolers were demonstrating anticipated readiness for kindergarten.

- In 1997, 40% of third graders performed at the advanced or proficient level in reading on the state assessment, increasing to 61% in 2000. Fourth graders improved from 35% to 58% during the same period.
- Fourteen percent of second graders performed above the 75th percentile in 1997, increasing to 19.2% in 2000.
- Eighty-four percent of first graders met the reading goal for the Federal Class Size Reduction Program (FCSRP) in 2000, up from 70% in 1999. 96% of second graders met FCSRP numerical proficiency goals in 2000; only 64% did so the previous year. Attendance has surpassed the city average, reversing its historically lowest standing.
- Suspension rates dropped from 2.3% in 1998 to 1.4% in 2000.
- Student mobility, typically between 30% and 35%, has been dropping; in 2001–02 it stands at 17%, the lowest in over six years.

Howe Elementary School Overview

Student mobility has been a serious challenge for Howe Elementary School. Five years ago, over one-third of its students were new every year, leading to discontinuity in teaching and barriers to trusting relationships with families. When Ed Dorff became the principal, he devoted time to talk with staff and parents about how to make Howe successful and developed a close working relationship with the Family Resource Center director. "Establishing a strong relationship in the neighborhood was the key to our progress," says Dorff.

Based on parent and community input, and using the Schools of the 21st Century community schools approach, Howe created the Family Resource Center through collaboration between the school district and neighborhood-based organizations. The center's director was hired using Title I and Community Development Block Grant funds. As the demand for more early childhood supports and parent education opportunities grew, the principal, the Family Resource Center director and the center's advisory board formed a fundraising committee to buy a large building next door. The district agreed to pay for the building's maintenance and operating expenses if the school offered Head Start classes in the facility. This provided the principal an opportunity to have all Head Start preschoolers living in the area attend classes at Howe. This gives the young children a seamless transition to kindergarten; previously they were bused all over town. This has made young families a part of the Howe community, which has had a significant affect on kindergarten readiness.

The new Howe Community Learning Center now houses an expanded family resource center; an urban 4-H Club student leadership and summer program; Boys and Girls Clubs programs with a full-time, on-site coordinator offering recreation and other youth development experiences; Head Start; academic clubs and activities; prekindergarten and adult literacy programs for Spanish speakers; and kitchen and laundry facilities. To further meet the needs of parents, they offer a high-quality, year-round, full-day preschool program as well as monthly dinner nights to help welcome parents into the school and to make it easier for time-strapped, working parents to become involved in their children's learning.

Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Act funds help pay for a parent educator to train young parents in child development, organize parent-to-parent home visitations and implement the Parents As Teachers program. Funding from the 21st Century Community Learning Centers has helped increase after-school literacy opportunities by supplementing a Title I Reading Recovery program, adding new literacy software, and establishing a newspaper club and foreign language programs. The Even Start program is offered to children and families through collaboration with the local technical college and literacy council. An on-site nurse and pediatrician, along with local health providers, help address students' health needs. A new grant and partnership allowed for the creation of a small dental clinic at the center.

The Howe Community Learning Council keeps the school and its partners focused on the goal of supporting child and family well-being to improve student performance. The council includes the principal, Title I staff, teachers, parents, the Boys and Girls Clubs, St. Vincent Hospital, the local realty company that led the fundrais-

ing efforts, and other business and community members. All these activities increased family involvement with the school and encouraged families to remain in the community.

Profile: James Otis Elementary School, Boston, Massachusetts

Community School Model: Boston Excels

218 Marion St.
Boston, MA 02128
(617) 635-8372
Thomas Connelly, Principal
tconnelly@boston.k12.ma.us
Susan Klaw, Family Literacy Program Director
sklaw@thehome.org

School Demographics

- Grades: K–5
- Enrollment: 400
- Geographic area: low-income urban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 65.1% Hispanic, 27.4% white, 4.5% black, 3% Asian
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 92%
- Limited English proficient: 88%
- Languages spoken: English, Portuguese, Spanish

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1999
- Partners: Boston Excels, Success for All, Read Boston, Neighborhood Health Center, New England Scores
- On-site coordination/management: full-time Boston Excels coordinator manages the Boston Excels Family-School director, full-time clinician and parent liaisons along with the school principal and reading facilitator
- Oversight/governance teams: Instructional Leadership Team, School Based Management Team, Student Support Team
- Funding sources: federal Even Start Program funds, Title I Federal funds, state and local agency funds, private grants

Learning-Related Outcomes and Accomplishments

- Led all Boston schools in improvement on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Systems test (MCAS) in 2000.
- Fourth-grade reading scores on the MCAS improved from 43% failing and 57% needing improvement in 1998 to 17% failing and 79% needing improvement, with 4% performing at the proficient level in 2000.
- On the mathematics section in 1998, 71% failed, 28% needed improvement and 2% were proficient. By 2000, only 22% failed, 60% needed improvement, 15% were proficient and 4% were advanced.
- Ninety-two percent of students are promoted to the next grade.
- Attendance improved from 94% in 1995 to 97.2% in 2000.
- In 2000, Boston Excels saw an 83-percent retention rate among adult students enrolled in English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) classes.
- One hundred percent of ESOL adult learners showed improvement in speaking, reading and writing (based on self-assessment and teachers' assessments).
- Fourteen parents are adult student volunteers and/or take leadership roles within the school; six are now employed by the school.
- In a statewide study of family literacy programs in 1999, Boston Excels had the highest attendance and retention rates.
- Ninety percent of parents are reading more at home with their children on a daily basis.
- In 1999–2000, teachers report that 100% of children in Excels' Family School Program performed better in school.

James Otis Elementary School Overview

James Otis Elementary School believes that literacy is the path to success. The school had seen positive results from the literacy-focused Success for All reform model. In 1999, Principal Tom Connelly knew what the next step had to be — educational, health and social supports to further help educate parents, enhance family involvement and improve student performance.

To provide this help, Otis began a partnership with Boston Excels (BE), a service-delivery model developed by the Home for Little Wanderers, a child and family services agency. Boston Excels now operates in a network of five Boston area schools.

BE provides a full-time coordinator to manage a team of family support staff. The coordinator acts as the liaison between the principal, parents and outside partners and is directly involved in school decision-making. The BE coordinator serves on the school-based management team, which comprises school administrators, teachers and an equal number of elected parents and is part of Otis's Instructional Leadership Team that oversees the School Improvement Plan.

With funding from Even Start, BE offers a comprehensive Family-School Literacy program, including adult ESOL classes, preschool and school-age after-school literacy classes, parenting education/support groups, field trips, and home visits for all families with children entering kindergarten. Parents and their children read together weekly, which allows parents to act as teachers — an empowering experience for non-English speakers. The Family Literacy program also engages parents by helping them understand how to talk with school staff and assist with their child's homework.

The BE Family-School director, five part-time parent teachers and the BE coordinator run this program. Three bilingual parent liaisons support teachers by reading to the children before school, calling parents regarding student attendance and arranging parent conferences.

A full-time BE licensed clinical social worker provides case management, family intervention, group and individual counseling, and crisis intervention services billable to Medicaid. The social worker coordinates the Student Support Team.

Pediatricians come to the school to read children health-related books. Other clinic staff conduct workshops for parents about health issues, clinic and insurance registration, and immunizations. Additional partners offer skill-building groups, violence prevention programs and nutrition programs. A weekly parent breakfast serves as an informal time to meet with the principal and receive information on neighborhood resources, immigration and other issues.

Bringing families together has helped to deepen relationships within the community and within the school. Parents see the school as a place that has given something to them, and have become advocates for greater resources for the school and their children.

Profile: Marquette Elementary School, Chicago, Illinois

Community School Model: Polk Bros. Foundation's Full-Service School Initiative

6550 S. Richmond
Chicago, IL 60629
(773) 535-9260
Paul O'Toole, Acting Principal
plotoole@cps.k12.il.us
Lori Rios, Marquette Full Service School Director
riosl@metrofamily.org

School Demographics

- Grades: K–8
- Enrollment: 2,100
- Geographic area: low-income urban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 52.5% African American; 44% Hispanic; 3.5% other (a mix of white, Arabic and other ethnicities
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 98%
- Limited English proficient: 18%
- Languages spoken: English, Spanish, Arabic

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1992
- Partners: Metropolitan Family Services (MFS), Latino Organization Southwest, Southwest Youth Collaborative, Holy Cross Hospital, local YMCA, Ronald McDonald Bus Program
- On-site coordination/management: full-service school director from MFS; interim principal; two assistant principals; and administration team (interim principal, two assistant principals, International Baccalaureate/gifted coordinator, school counselor, school engineer, case manager, head of bilingual department, Success For All coordinator, curriculum coordinator and full-service school director)

- Oversight/governance teams: Local School Council and Full-Service School Oversight Committee
- Funding sources: Title I federal funds, Local School Council, Illinois Department of Human Services' Teen Reach grant, grants and donations

Learning-Related Accomplishment and Outcomes

- Reading scores have improved at rates exceeding the citywide average, while the poverty rate among students increased from 68% in 1990 to 96% in 2001.
- In 1990, 20% of students scored at or above national norms in reading and math. By 2001, scores improved to 34% for reading and 38% for math.
- One hundred percent of students completed all immunizations and physical exams in 2001, up from approximately 93% compliance prior to 1997.
- Attendance increased from 90.2% to 92.9% between 1994 and 2000 and currently stands at 96%.
- Mobility rates dropped steadily from over 41% to 22% between 1995 and 2000.
- Truancy declined from 1.6% to .5% between 1997 and 2000.
- The average number of adults in the after-school program who parents and teachers said know the children well and could help a child with a serious problem increased from 1.5 adults to 2.75 adults between 1997 and 1999.
- The building has been graffiti free for eight years.

Marquette Elementary School Overview

Marquette Elementary in Southwest Chicago is the largest elementary school in Illinois, housing 2,100 students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

In 1996, the school's connection to the community expanded beyond the informal partnerships former principal Fred Kravarik had created with a local Latino youth organization and the Southwest Youth Collaborative. In partnership with MFS, Marquette received the Polk Bros. Foundation Full-Service School grant. The grant provided for a full-service school director employed by MFS, and the expansion of after-school learning opportunities until 9:00 p.m. The Marquette Full-Service School director, Lori Rios, who also coordinates parent volunteers, says, "The full-service component of Marquette has helped teachers to look at the student as a whole, not only supporting their academic needs, but also recognizing how recreation and other interests are important because it all comes full circle. We've seen an attitude change in the students who now look at the school in a different light." The partnership with MFS has helped break down barriers between teachers and students. Parents feel more comfortable knowing that the school is open and that their children are safe and actively involved. Rios, who serves as an integral member of the administration team that meets weekly to talk about a range of school issues and student and family needs, is "a part of the answer and solution."

Since the Polk Bros. grant ended in 1999, Marquette and MFS have reallocated resources and sought additional funding to sustain their programs. Title I funds have been used to support about 60% to 70% of the full-service school programs, paying for resource teachers, instructors' time after school, supplies, field trips, buses and security, as well as a full-time social worker, nurse and counselor.

These staff members have made a world of difference, and their success has helped bring in more community resources. Staff of a neighboring hospital provide immunizations, while the Ronald McDonald bus brings a doctor to do physical exams. The social worker and Rios make referrals to MFS for more serious mental health concerns and meet with parents weekly in the evenings to talk about their children.

Marquette's large recreational and academic after-school programs serve about 500 youth and adults. The Homework Corner program provides assistance to students in grades one through four for two hours every day in a coordinated effort with daytime teachers. The adult program offers recreation, ESL, GED, citizenship and computer classes in Spanish and English, as well as various parenting classes. Many parents now attend the local junior college as a result of their experience with Marquette. Overall, there has been an inverse relationship between poverty and reading and math improvement at Marquette. A greater proportion of the student

body is low income, but with a greater degree of support and adult attention, they are achieving more.

Marquette has institutionalized this community school approach by incorporating elements into the School Improvement Plan. The principal, staff, parents and community partners see the improvements in school climate and are committed to keeping the programs and the school open longer hours.

Profile: Northeast Elementary School, Ankeny, Iowa

Community School Model: Community Education Districtwide model

306 SW School St.
Ankeny, IA 50021-0189
(515) 965-9620
Paula Lee, Principal
ptlee@ankeny.k12.ia.us
Kevin Koester, Community Education Director
(515) 965-9606
kkoester@ankeny.k12.ia.us

School Demographics

- Grades: PreK–5
- Enrollment: 512
- Geographic area: suburban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 96% white (including Bosnian refugees)
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: less than 6%
- Limited English proficient: 3%
- Languages spoken: English, Spanish, Bosnian

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1980
- Partners with school: Ankeny Public Schools Community Education Office, YMCA, Des Moines Child and Adolescent Center, Blank Children's Hospital, Heartland Area Education Agency
- Partners with district: Ankeny Academy of Music, Ankeny Senior Citizen Center, Ankeny Substance Abuse Project, Central Iowa Computer Users Group, Des Moines Child and Adolescent Guidance Center, Employee and Family Resources, Nevlen Health Center, Polk County Congregate Meal Site, Red Rock Area Community College Action Program, The Ankeny Klothing Exchange (TAKE), United Way — Ankeny Service Center, YMCA Live-Y'ers School-Age Child Care
- On-site coordination/management: principal, district outreach coordinator, building assistance teams
- Oversight/governance teams: Heartland Area Education Agency, District Community Education Office, Community Education Advisory Council, Parent Advisory Committee, Superintendent's Education Task Force, School Administrative Team
- Funding sources: Ankeny Community School District, in-kind resources from partners

Learning-Related Accomplishments and Outcomes

- In 1999, 22% of Northeast students performed at the advanced level (far above grade level from the 90th to the 100th percentile) in reading comprehension on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), increasing to 33.8% in 2000.
- In 1999, 19% performed at the advanced level in total mathematics on the ITBS, increasing to 23.8% in 2000.

Northeast Elementary School Overview

Principal Paula Lee feels that changes in family life present the greatest challenges for schools today. With parents working long hours and unable to spend much time with their children, the need for mental health services and after-school care has risen significantly in the six years she has been at Northeast Elementary School.

Ankeny, a primarily middle-class community outside Des Moines, has responded to these challenges with community education. For more than 20 years, community educators have worked collaboratively with community-based organizations, religious groups, the school district, the city and public agencies. Every five years, community leaders come together for a 2.5-day Citizens Planning Conference where they select three priorities for action. They decide on sustainable community solutions to their problems, determine the resources needed and create partnerships to make it happen. This

year, they formed a Diversity and Cultural Opportunity task force, co-chaired by the Community College representative and a middle school student, to focus on improving the cultural competency of community residents through enhanced fine arts and cultural diversity opportunities.

This communitywide planning strategy led to the creation of a centrally located Community Resource Center that helps children and families from Northeast and other district schools. The center provides after-school ESL tutoring, a clothing center and food pantry, an alternative education program, a senior center, a computer center, counseling agencies, and a Children's Hospital health clinic. Juvenile crime and violence prevention services, along with substance abuse counseling, also are available. Bringing a WIC benefits office into the center increased the number of low-income mothers using all of the center's services from 26 to 260 last year.

Early identification, intervention and prevention are key components of Northeast's strategy to help students avoid underachievement. School district clinicians work closely with Northeast clinical staff and the principal to support students with behavioral problems. The district student outreach coordinator serves as a liaison among school, home and community, identifying students who are at risk due to problems outside of school. The coordinator also secures funding and resources for a variety of student and school needs. Year-round services include ESL summer programs designed to provide enrichment, remediation and personal development for students. Lee feels that their preventive approach has helped to reduce the number of teacher referrals for student behavior.

Ben Norman, the recently retired district superintendent, understood that the community has a strong impact on its schools. He created several vehicles for communication among parents, school staff, community agencies, institutions and the larger community. The current superintendent, Kent Mutchler, serves on the Community Education Advisory Council, which comprises representatives from the city council, United Way, school board, chamber of commerce, neighborhoods, youth, ministerial associations, school administrator and higher education. He also participates on a Chamber of Commerce-sponsored Education Task Force focusing on businesses' school-to-work objectives for job readiness. Every school has a Parent Advisory Committee that enables parents to discuss issues such as construction, curriculum, school operations and safety with the principal.

Profile: Woodmere Elementary School, Portland, Oregon

Community School Model: Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN)

7900 SE Duke St.
Portland, OR 97206
(503) 916-6373
Vonnie Condon, Principal
vcondon@pps.k12.or.us

School Demographics

- Grades: K–5
- Enrollment: 503
- Geographic area: urban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 71% white, 16% Hispanic, 8% Asian, 2% African American, 2% Native American
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 79%
- Limited English proficient: 33%
- Languages spoken: English, Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1999
- Partners: Portland Impact; Metropolitan Family Service–FAST; Portland Parks and Recreation; Student Attendance Initiative; Oregon Council of Hispanic Affairs; Immigrant Resource Center of Oregon; Portland State University; Weed and Seed; Community Cycling Center; Marshall High student community service; Girl's Initiative Network; Brentwood-Darlington Community Center; Department of Human Services; Portland Impact Mentoring Program; Outer Southeast Caring Community; Reed College Seeds Project; Southeast Community and Schools Partnership Project; Brownies and Cub Scouts; RACC; Multnomah County Touchstone; Portland Community College Learn and Serve Project; Edgefield Children's Program; Take the Time 40

Assets grant; Full Esteem Ahead; Ethos, Inc.; Music Support

- On-site coordination/management: Principal and full-time site coordinator from Portland Impact.
- Oversight/governance teams: Woodmere Site Council doubles as the SUN Advisory Council, a multijurisdictional management team from various partners oversees all SUN operations
- Funding sources: Dominoes Pizza, Kaiser Permanente, Fred Meyer, Reed College, Wells Fargo Bank, Portland State University, University of Portland, Portland Public Schools Foundation, Foster Grandparent Program, Portland Public Schools, Portland Impact, Family Works

Learning-Related Accomplishments and Outcomes

- Student scores on state benchmarks increased in the past two years: Third-grade math increased from 77% to 89% of students meeting or exceeding benchmark; third-grade reading increased from 50% to 79% at or above benchmark; fifth-grade reading improved from 53% to 70% at or above benchmark; and fifth-grade math from 58% to 76% at or above benchmark.

Woodmere Elementary School Overview

Woodmere Elementary School is in the Outer Southeast Community of the Brentwood-Darlington neighborhood in Portland, OR. Woodmere has changed markedly over the past 10 years and now boasts a community of families with mixed ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Forty-five percent of Woodmere students have a home language other than English and 33% of the students receive services as English language learners. The school is in a high-poverty neighborhood, with 79% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch services. Over the same time period, however, family stability has risen and mobility has decreased. The Woodmere community is actively involved in supporting the school and its students.

Woodmere School has been engaged in school improvement efforts over the past five years. With consistent and continued professional development, the instructional focus has been sharpened. Woodmere faculty worked directly with Leanna Traill of *Traills to Literacy* to learn effective strategies of how to support literacy in the classroom. Consultants provided demonstration and modeling while teachers observed and later provided similar demonstrations to their colleagues. Classroom doors opened and true dialog on teaching and learning began. The professional model of consultation and teacher planning was carried into the math program as well. With the weekly help of consultants, teachers worked in teams to develop, implement, modify and integrate development of mathematical thinking into their daily work. Woodmere teachers supported one another with their collective wisdom to provide a strong, consistent and integrated instructional program for all students.

This professional development has had a tremendous impact on student achievement at Woodmere. Parents are involved on a daily basis through consistent homework expectations and communication. All students, whether learning English, gifted or needing special support, are reading, writing and excelling in mathematics.

Additionally, Woodmere has engaged the community in providing support to families and children outside the school day. Opportunities for enrichment, recreation, homework assistance, parent involvement and social service support have been developed through a special grant from the city and county, "Schools Uniting Neighborhoods," and through the Touchstone Family Support program. Mentors, social services, health services and more than 40 extended-day activities are available at the school to support families and students. Outreach efforts include ESL classes, recreation groups for parents and preschoolers, a Russian-speaking family support group, Latino and Asian family outreach workers to reach under-served populations, and community business engagement forums. Parent support nights provide follow-up and in-home support services to improve family dynamics. The school's annual Fall Family Festival celebrates multiculturalism with free international food, artists teaching hands-on crafts, take-home arts and performances for about 600 parents, students and community members.

Woodmere's success is supported through multiple agency and business partnerships, which support the vision of community and school. Woodmere has become a community learning center, supporting children, families and the neighborhood in the effort to develop successful citizens for their future.

Profile: Families on Track (FOT) at Parkway Heights Middle School, South San Francisco, California

Community School Model: Local initiative based on Children's Aid Society Community Schools model

825 Park Way
South San Francisco, CA 94080
(650) 583-0392
Julene Hunter Johnson, FOT Executive Director
fotrack@aol.com

School Demographics

- Grades: 6–8
- Enrollment: 168 in FOT Academy, 800 at Parkway Heights
- Geographic area: low-income urban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 74% Hispanic, 10% white, 5.4% Asian, 5.4% Native American, 3% African American, 1.8% Pacific Islander
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 51.8%
- Limited English proficient: 40.5%
- Languages spoken: English, Spanish

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1998
- Partners: Bothin Foundation, Family Service Agency of San Mateo County, Boys and Girls Clubs of North San Mateo County, South San Francisco Unified School District, North Peninsula Family Alternatives and Pyramid Alternatives, the Performance Arts Workshop, the Tooth Mobile
- On-site coordination/management: FOT director, Parkway Heights principal
- Oversight/governance teams: FOT board of directors, FOT steering committee, board committees
- Funding sources: Bothin Foundation, Title I federal funds, Kimball Foundation, Charles and Helen Schwab Family Foundation, Stuart Foundation, Silver Giving Foundation, individuals, corporate donations

Learning-Related Accomplishment and Outcomes

- Seventh-grade FOT students improved their attendance from their sixth-grade attendance rates.
- Seventy-three percent of the FOT Academy sixth graders and 80% of students using FOT's comprehensive services decreased the number of absences, compared to fifth-grade attendance reports.
- Incoming sixth-grade FOT students had lower overall GPAs than non-FOT students. By the seventh grade, the same group of students had reduced this gap by a statistically significant margin.
- Students in the FOT Academy were the only group to increase their grade point averages between the first and second semester.
- Five percent of FOT students attended retention summer school, compared to 12% of non-FOT students.
- Thirty-nine percent of students receiving the greatest number of hours of service demonstrated an increase in their intent to avoid missing school.
- Students participating in FOT were more likely than students in the comparison group to envision a better future for themselves at the end of the school year.
- Ninety-two percent of parents reported feeling supported by FOT and thought that it was a useful program, not only for the student but for the rest of the family as well.
- Seventy-one percent of families reported spending more time with their children since starting with FOT.
- Students at Level I were more likely to report a feeling of connectedness to their teacher or other adults working in FOT.
- In October 1999, 39% of girls and 26% of boys achieved the program goal for push-ups, and by April 2000, these proportions increased to 70% for girls and 64% for boys.
- Seventy-one percent of youth met their personal fitness goals in each of the activities by the end of the year.

Families on Track at Parkway Heights Middle School Overview

Families on Track is a full-service "community school within a school" conceived by the Bothin Foundation and based on the Children's Aid Society's Community School model. It started as a partnership between the

foundation and the South San Francisco Unified School District at the Parkway Heights Middle School. Parkway Heights is in a primarily Hispanic neighborhood with an unemployment rate of 30%.

The foundation and a committee led a two-year planning process for FOT. They conducted community forums with youth and families to understand their wants and needs, as well as made critical connections to county and city officials to gain their support. Mary Griffin, the former president of the county board of supervisors, was a champion for FOT and, for the first time ever, brought together the county, the city and the school district to collaborate on funding a new building on Parkway's campus for all of FOT's social services.

This work led to the design of FOT as a small academy for sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students within Parkway Heights Middle School. Students in the academy generally lack academic and social skills and need support services to fulfill their academic potential. The academy provides smaller classes; an extended school day and year with academic, cultural, recreational and community service experiences; on-site support services for students and their families; and adult education and recreational activities for parents. Parkway students and their families who are on the academy's waiting list receive all of the same comprehensive health, mental health and social services and after-school opportunities, but do not benefit from the small classes of 24 students. FOT serves approximately 25% of the entire Parkway student body.

Full-time youth and family advocates from the Family Service Agency of San Mateo County collaborate with teachers to help students having behavioral or emotional difficulties and their families. The North Peninsula Family Alternatives and Pyramid Alternatives provide licensed therapists, while the Boys and Girls Clubs offer Smart Moves and Smart Girls programs. A mandatory after-school program includes a one-hour homework center, enrichment activities, physical education, dance and drama, and a student advisory meeting where students have the opportunity to give feedback to staff. Dental services also are offered to students.

FOT has now become a separate nonprofit organization with its own board of directors. The steering committee, whose members include representatives from the city, county, school district and community-based organizations, guides the program. The board of directors provides community leadership and obtains funding. The FOT executive director and the Parkway Heights principal run the FOT Academy.

Case management and after-school homework assistance will be available on-site at the two feeder high schools to continue providing intensive supports after students leave middle school. They will meet biweekly at the middle school to continue to foster the close knit community created at FOT. Executive Director Paul Hamann proudly states, "FOT has built a community of providers. Organizations have brought the best of what they can offer to the partnership and in turn, we have developed a community among our students and families."

The San Mateo County School Boards Association recently asked FOT to explore becoming a model for social services that would be more fully woven into the county's educational system.

Profile: North Middle School, Aurora, Colorado

Community School Model: West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (University of Pennsylvania)

12095 Montview Blvd.
Aurora, CO 80010
(303) 364-7411
Jerry Lemons, Principal
jlemons@north.aps.k12.co.us
Paula Bennett, After School Coordinator
paulab@north.aps.k12.co.us

School Demographics

- Grades: 6–8
- Enrollment: 850
- Geographic area: low-income urban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 56% Hispanic, 23% black, 17% white, 3% Asian, 1% Native American
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 75% to 80%
- Limited English proficient: 33%
- Languages spoken: English, Spanish

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1998
- Partners: Community College of Aurora (CCA), Aurora Public Schools, Aurora Mental Health, City of Aurora, Weed and Seed, Downtown Aurora Visual Arts, Latin Council, City's Office of Youth Development, State Governor, Colorado University Health and Science Center, Denver University, CU Boulder, Aurora Police Department, AmeriCorps
- On-site coordination/management: community school coordinator/after-school program director, CCA outreach coordinator, principal, two assistant principals, student support team
- Oversight/governance teams: Aurora Partnership Steering Committee, Weed and Seed Board
- Funding sources: Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, Fund for Colorado's Future, state funds, Safe and Drug Free Schools federal grant, Department of Justice, Weed and Seed federal funds, local community businesses, universities, in-kind services, donations

Learning-Related Outcomes and Accomplishments

- Forty-seven percent drop in suspensions, from 676 in 1999–2000 to 355 in 2000–01.
- Colorado State CSAP scores increased from 15% of students performing at the proficient or advanced levels in 1999 to 18% in 2000.
- Students who participated in the after-school programs or summer academies had higher attendance, lower suspensions, and failed two or more classes significantly less than students who did not participate in after-school programs.
- Six middle school students qualified for the Presidential Scholars Award.
- 53% of students improved one or more grade levels during the 2000–01 school year.
- Initial results suggest that the student support team was successful with 60% to 70% of troubled students, measured by eliminating further discipline action, finding a more appropriate placement or providing services that help students work through crisis situations.

North Middle School Overview

Aurora, CO, a Denver suburb facing large increases in its low-income Hispanic immigrant population, knew that it needed community support to help its schools and students succeed. Advocates from city and state offices, local colleges, the public school system, and community-based organizations, along with North Middle School's principal and community partnerships coordinator, have come together to improve the five square miles known as Original Aurora Renewal, the city's poorest area. This effort has brought new resources to the school and created partnerships with organizations that have a similar vision for strengthening the community. Federal Weed and Seed funds from Original Aurora Renewal support these efforts, along with in-kind resources from the participating agencies.

A grant from the West Philadelphia Improvement Corps fueled a strong partnership between North Middle School and the service-learning division of the Community College of Aurora. This relationship now is expanding to other higher education institutions. North Middle School teachers and community college faculty provide athletic, educational, artistic and service-learning experiences for students and their families to build the connection between older students, younger children and adult community members. North students also read and do art projects with elementary school students.

North also is working with the University of Colorado's Health Science Center and hospital to help students see the health field as a career opportunity. North's Summer Science Academy, which integrates themes of biology, anatomy, astronomy and geology with art, computers and literacy, has heightened interest in science through project-based hands-on learning experiences. Field trips to university labs bring learning to life through computerized human dissections.

Computer and ESL classes help adults build skills for self-sufficiency, while monthly breakfast meetings allow parents to meet with teachers and administrators to have their voices heard.

North is dedicated to creating a safe and nurturing school environment that students might not find in the neighborhood surrounding the school. A dress code; smaller, two-year learning communities; and coordinated

physical and mental health and social support services are helping address disruptive student behavior. The assistant principal manages a student support team of mental health counselors, social workers and other staff working to help students. A Safe and Drug-Free Schools coordinator and a school resource officer also serve on the team; they promote youth assets, teach about the dangers of drugs and alcohol, and offer parent support groups and peer counseling.

Former Community Partnership Coordinator Nancy Sturgeon believes "it is important to meet the needs of the community you are serving, and get parents to value the programs their kids are in. We're in this together." Paula Bonell, North's lead partner from the Community College of Aurora, says, "we hope to strengthen families' connections to our school in an effort to promote a partnership that will improve student understanding and learning."

Profile: Pinelands Regional Middle and High School, Tuckerton, New Jersey

Community School Model: New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program

565 and 590 Nugentown Rd.
Tuckerton, NJ 08087- 0248
(609) 296-3106
Thomas Procopio, High School Principal
TProcopio@pinelandsregional.org
Lawrence Mesarick, Middle School Principal
LMesarick@pinelandsregional.org
Virginia Galaro, Youth Services Director,
New Jersey Schools Based Youth Services Program
VGalaro@pinelandsregional.org

School Demographics

- Grades: 7–8 (middle school) and 9–12 (high school), in separate buildings
- Enrollment: Middle School 709, High School 1,104
- Geographic area: low-income rural
- Ethnic/racial composition: 96% white
- Qualify for free and reduced-price lunch: 30%
- Limited English proficient: none

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1987
- Partners: New Jersey Department of Human Services, Pinelands Regional School District, Saint Francis Counseling Services, Family Planning Program of Ocean County, Kimball Medical Center, Ocean County Private Industry Council, 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC)
- Additional partners: four elementary sending districts, Ocean County Vocational Technical School, Great Bay Police Athletic League, Pinelands Adventure Ropes Course, Little Egg Harbor Police Department, King Pin Bowling Lanes, Gold Hawk Tae Kwan Do
- On-site coordination/management: New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program director, 21st CCLC program director
- Oversight/governance: Pinelands Regional School District and superintendent of schools/Pinelands Regional Board of Education
- Funding sources: New Jersey Department of Human Services, 21st CCLC grant, Pinelands Regional School District

Learning-Related Outcomes and Accomplishments

- Teen pregnancies declined from an average of 20 per year to an average of three per year. Teen pregnancy prevention education model deemed "effective" by Rutgers University's School of Social Work.
- Average SAT verbal and math scores have risen steadily and exceeded the average state and national scores over the last 10 years. Pinelands ranked third in Ocean County in 2002.
- In 2001, 89.8% of students passed the New Jersey High School Proficiency Test, compared to 74.4% in 1993.
- Referrals for special education evaluations decreased by 20% from 1999 to 2000.
- Incoming seventh-grade 21st CCLC summer remediation program participants increased their average academic performance in English by 1.5 letter grades — more than 50% increased by two letter grades, going from C to A. In math, they

increased their performance by 1.75 letter grades — with more than 50% increasing by two letter grades. None of the participants in the summer enrichment program failed English or math.

- The number of students arriving late and/or tardy to class has reduced by 18% since it became a school goal in 1999.
- The attendance rate increased from 89.5% in 2000 to 92.5% in 2001.
- The 21st CCLC "Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs Program" has had significant impact on substance abuse. More than 600 people attended the culminating family event.
- The dropout rate has decreased to less than 2% over the past several years as a result of community school efforts.
- 42.1% of 2001 graduates went to four-year colleges, 27.6% enrolled in two-year college, 5.1% pursued vocational education and 3.7% enlisted in the military.

Pinelands Regional Middle and High School Overview

Pinelands Regional School District serves a 140-square-mile area in coastal New Jersey that has gradually evolved from a socioeconomically depressed rural community to a rural/suburban area. Falling within the Pinelands Preservation area, there is little industrial growth and most residents commute to work in the Atlantic City casinos, leaving many youngsters unsupervised. There is little public transportation in the county, which prevents many families from accessing social services provided in the county seat 35 miles away. The area's problems were taking their toll on the school district.

In 1988, the New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program (NJSBYSP) was developed to address the needs of adolescents in the community, identifying issues of drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, school dropouts, and unsupervised discretionary time. The NJSBYSP at Pinelands Regional School District is a 14-year-old collaborative partnership between the New Jersey Department of Human Services, the school board and local community agencies. The goal of the state program is to help teens achieve their full potential: to graduate, to be mentally and physically healthy, to be drug free, and to be ready to enter employment or continue their education. The Pinelands program provides one-stop shopping for services located in the schools.

This collaboration has created a range of programs, services and resources at the school site that provide primary and preventative health care, mental health and social services, employment assistance, family planning education, substance abuse counseling, pregnant teen and teen parent support services, transportation, a 24-hour teen crisis hotline, and recreational programs and activities to all students in the district. In 2000, the district received a 21st Century Community Learning Center grant for additional community-school activities. Now in the third and final year of funding, Pinelands Extended Community Learning Center provides academic enrichment, after-school and evening recreation, tutoring, and after-school remediation for noninvolved and at-risk children. Summer academic and recreational transitional programs are offered for incoming sixth and seventh graders needing additional support to achieve passing grades in core academic areas. The center also conducts a communitywide summer recreation program that serves more than 1,000 students each year.

The NJSBYSP works closely with the school's health, guidance and educational departments and its child study teams to support student success. Additionally, a strong network of coordination has been developed with local mental health providers, the state child protection agency, local juvenile correctional staff, local law enforcement, the Police Athletic League, local church groups and municipal agencies to maximize services and support for area children.

Profile: Webster Open Magnet School, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Community School Model: Minneapolis Beacons

425 Fifth St., NE
Minneapolis, MN 55413
(612) 669-0800
Greg Beyer, Principal
gbeyer@mpls.k12.mn.us
Matt Kjorstad, YMCA Site Director
mkjorstad@ymcampls.org

School Demographics

- Grades: K–8
- Enrollment: 754
- Geographic area: urban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 31% Asian, 30% African American, 24% white, 13% Hispanic, 3% Native American
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 83%
- Limited English proficient: 39%
- Languages spoken: 40

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1997
- Partners: Northeast YMCA (lead partner), City of Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, Minneapolis Promise for Youth, Girls Scouts, Deloitte and Touche, Honeywell, United Defense, Bennett Rider, Northeast Senior Resource Center, Logan Park – St. Anthony East Community Health, Eastside Neighborhood Services, Lego Company, Lions Club, local high school, local church, University of Minnesota, Youth Trust
- On-site coordination/management: principal, YMCA full-time site director, Parent Involvement Committee
- Oversight/governance teams: School Site Council, Community Advisory Beacons Team, Summer School Committee, Area Parent Advisory Councils
- Funding sources: Title I federal funds; Community Education Office, Minneapolis Public School District; Health Disparities state grant; Prevention/Intervention state grant; Cargil Peer Literacy grant; McKnight Foundation; Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund; General Mills; Minneapolis Foundation; Federal Weed and Seed funds; Best Buy; America Reads; local church and business donations

Learning-Related Outcomes and Accomplishments:

- Fifty-seven percent of students made one year's growth in one year's time as represented on the Northwest Achievement Levels Test (NALT) in 2001.
- Students showed a significant 2.4 Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) gain for grades two–seven on the math section of the NALT from 1999 to 2000.
- Students participating in the Beacons program showed reading gains of 1.5 (on a scale of -2 to 7) versus -.5 for comparison students on citywide assessments.
- 72% of Beacons students have a 95% or higher attendance rate compared to 55.5% for non-Beacons students.
- Beacons students have an average suspension rate of .15 days per student compared to .30 days per non-Beacons students.

Webster Open Magnet School Overview

The Webster Open Magnet School has an extraordinarily diverse population of Hmong, African American, Latino and white families. The Beacons center, one of six in Minneapolis, has become an increasingly integral aspect of school life since its origin in 1997, and its director, Matt Kjorstad, is a well-known figure among the school staff. Greg Beyer, principal for the past 2.5 years, has seen "the creation of a real community of adults supporting young people, and less and less separation between the Beacons center and the school."

The Beacons center offers a range of opportunities after school, with increasing linkages to the school day. Many Club Beacons offerings are available to students that focus 50% on academic enrichment and 50% on youth development activities. These include homework help and tutoring by parents, community members and University of Minnesota students, in addition to America Reads volunteers who work on literacy. The clubs also focus on experiential education type of activities that foster team building and develop relationships between young people and adults.

Leadership development is a key focus for the Beacons. Students participate in three leadership retreats annually and are expected to act as leaders in their schools. The Beacons leadership development strategy has been incorporated into the 21st century community education learning center program at seven other schools by the district's community education department. The Webster YMCA Beacons also has helped to establish a peer tutoring program in which eighth

graders read to low-performing primary-grade children. The program is helping both older and younger students improve their reading.

A variety of partnerships supplement the integrated work of the schools and YMCA Beacons. Best Friends, a program designed for fourth- to eighth-grade girls, helps them learn about themselves and learn skills to survive in the inner city. A business partnership with Deloitte and Touche offers not only donations to the school and program — their employees also help eighth graders prepare for the Minnesota Basic Standards Test. Other community partners provide cultural programs to support Webster's growing Latino student population and have helped the Latino families in the community see the importance of these programs.

The principal works closely with the Beacons site director to coordinate the program. In addition, part-time youth development workers keep in touch with parents and teachers. As part of its youth development philosophy, the YMCA Beacons employs seventh- and eighth-grade students as junior youth counselors.

Three times each month, the principal, the assistant principal, the Beacons center site director and the teaching staff discuss management and planning issues at a staff meeting. The Beacons site director serves as the liaison between the Beacons program and the school, keeping communication lines open between the after-school and the regular school staffs. The Beacons director notes, "This is not the YMCA's program. This is not Webster School's program. This is the community's program, and we welcome everyone in to be a part of it."

Profile: Carson High School, Carson, California

Community School Model: California Healthy Start

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Carson, CA 90745
(310) 835-0181, ext. 500
Douglas Waybright, Principal
dwaybr1@lausd.k12.ca.us
Mary Beth DiCecco, Learning Support Coordinator
mdicec1@lausd.k12.ca.us

School Demographics

- Grades: 9–12
- Enrollment: 3,300
- Geographic area: urban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 41% Hispanic, 23% African American, 23% Filipino, 6% Pacific Islander, 4% white, 1% Asian, 1% Native American
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 60%
- Limited English proficient: 8% to 10%
- Languages spoken: English, Spanish, Tagalog

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1994
- Partners: Asian American Drug Abuse Program (AADAP); South Bay Family Healthcare Center; California State University at Dominguez Hills; City of Carson Department of Public Safety; Carson Child Guidance Program; Los Angeles County Departments of Mental Health, Probation and Sheriffs; Children's Institute International; International Foster Family Agency; Western Region Asian Pacific (WRAP); California State University at Long Beach; University of Southern California; UCLA; Kaiser-Permanente Medical Center; YWCA; UCLA-RAND Center for Adolescent Health Promotion; See's Candies
- On-site coordination/management: Healthy Start coordinator and Learning Support coordinator, Special Team for At Risk Students (STARS), administrator
- Oversight/governance teams: District K Resource Coordinating Council, Carson 2000Plus Local Coordinating Council and six task forces, Carson Coordinating Council
- Funding sources: Originally Healthy Start funding from California Department of Education (presently Los Angeles Unified School District LEA Medi-Cal Reimbursement), Immediate Intervention for Under-Performing Schools state grant, in-kind resources from partners

Learning-Related Accomplishments and Outcomes

- Percentage of students scoring at or above the 50th percentile in reading improved from 19% in 1999 to 25% in 2001 for 11th graders on the Stanford 9 Test.
- Attendance continuously rose from 86.67% in 1999–2000 to 92.73% in 2001–02.
- Suspensions declined from 9.97% in 1998 to 4.66% in 2000.
- The dropout rate decreased from 4.8% in 1990 to 4.1% in 2000, lower than the district average.
- Forty-four percent of graduating seniors passed course requirements required for state university admission in 2001.

Carson High School Overview

Amidst the pressure of high-stakes testing, Carson High School Principal Doug Waybright knew that "test scores were not going to improve if we didn't get extra supports in place" to address critical barriers that prevented academic progress. Those supports would come in the form of the school's Healthy Start program. The school obtained an initial Healthy Start grant from the California State Department of Education. The Los Angeles Unified School District LEA Medi-Cal Reimbursement program helped sustain the program, while a state-funded Immediate Intervention for Under-Performing Schools grant provided for a learning support coordinator. Waybright sees a safer student climate and an increase in trust between the students and the staff as a visible result of their success.

Currently in its sixth year of operation, the Healthy Start program, known as HEART (Health, Education and Resources for the Twenty-First Century), has recently expanded into the 2,400-square-foot Carson High School Learning Support and Family Center and serves a student population of approximately 3,300. The center's mental health/family services component offers case management, individual and group counseling, and crisis intervention. Several community organizations, universities and city agencies collaborate on-site in this effort. A health services component houses a teen clinic operated by the South Bay Family Healthcare Center, which provides sports physicals, acute care, adolescent health education, family planning services and referrals for dental services.

Youth development is a valued strategy at Carson. A YWCA Young Women's Group is popular, as is a mentoring program that pairs peers and adults with students. As an alternative to juvenile court, students participate in an on-site teen court that is facilitated by a judge and probation officer. This year, Carson's partners provided leadership opportunities for youth and were encouraged to serve on committees and participate in community meetings.

As partners were added and services multiplied, greater system integration occurred. STARS reviews and makes recommendations regarding students referred for services. Using a holistic approach to address student needs, STARS maps school resources and broadens awareness to increase options for intervention. Programs are not viewed as "add-ons," but as central to providing resources to support the school's instructional mission. As Mary Beth DiCecco, learning support coordinator, expresses, "We need to consider all services and resources when discussing effective interventions. While mental health support is an important resource, there are many other campus programs that can support students and families, and engage them in the educational process. Sometimes getting a parent to a parent program can be the most effective intervention we can make."

Community-based collaborations also support school-based programming. Carson 2000Plus, a local resource coordinating council since 1995, has six project-driven task forces — after-school activities, gang awareness and prevention, health services, parent involvement, conflict resolution, and school-to-career — that have emerged as representative of community voices on important issues. A similar districtwide partnership also is in place, and is facilitated by the Los Angeles Unified School District's organization facilitator, who serves as a liaison between the school and the community in developing school/community partnerships for the local district.

Profile: East Hartford High School, East Hartford, Connecticut

Community School Model: Local initiative

869 Forbes St.
East Hartford, CT 06118
(860) 622-5203
Craig Jordan, Principal
cjordan@easthartford.org
Kenneth Gwozdz, Student Assistance Center Director
Debbie Poerio, School-Based Health Center Director

School Demographics

- Grades: 9–12
- Enrollment: 2,400
- Geographic area: low-income urban
- Ethnic/racial composition: 72% students of color, 28% white
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 60%
- Limited English proficient: 12%
- Languages spoken: 40

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1991
- Partners: University of Connecticut, Manchester Hospital, United Way, East of the River Alcohol and Substance Elimination, Connecticut Regional Education Council, State Department of Social Services, Connecticut Education Association, Pratt and Whitney
- On-site coordination/management: team comprising principal, Student Assistance Center director, School-Based Health Center director
- Oversight/governance teams: *ad hoc* committees, University of Connecticut Advisory Board, biannual strategic planning session with staff and community members
- Funding sources: from partners listed above; federal, state and local agency funds; private grants

Learning-Related Accomplishment and Outcomes

- A 20% increase over five years (from 19% in 1995 to 39% in 2000) in students who meet the goal on the Connecticut Academic Performance Test.
- A 92% improvement over the past six years in the dropout rate, from 22% in 1994 to 1.7% in 2000.
- Ninety-eight percent of students graduate.
- Sixty percent reduction in fighting and 50% reduction in suspension over the past six years. No expulsions in the past seven years.
- The number of programs and services that students used at the Student Assistance Center increased from 6,000 to 12,000 between 1999 and 2000 while student enrollment increased from 2,000 to 2,400.
- The School-Based Health Center ensured that all students had physical examinations and were immunized in the 2000–01 school year.
- 80% of students now go to at least a two-year college, a 20% increase over the last seven years.

East Hartford High School Overview

Guided by the philosophy that the school and the community must work together to provide whatever youth need to be successful, former East Hartford Principal Steven Edwards and his staff have worked to build purposeful partnerships that address a range of student, family, school and community problems.

To address gang violence, drug abuse and racial tension among an increasingly diverse population, Edwards and his teachers regularly hold multilingual community forums in housing projects and churches to talk to families about their children's needs. Teachers visit their students' neighborhoods to better understand the challenges they face. This led to the opening of a mental health center in a local housing project and an increase in home visits by school staff. Wanting to involve families more, the principal formed an *ad hoc* committee of teachers, parents and students to reduce the ninth-grade failure rate; the committee also helped redesign report cards to make them more understandable to parents.

Within the larger school, a team-teaching approach creates small learning communities for ninth and 10th graders who stay with the same teachers for two years. The best teachers are assigned to the lowest-performing students for all subjects, since these students need the best instruction. The school also has created special programs to help at-risk students, such as the P.R.I.D.E.

(Personal Responsibility in Daily Effort) program, which rewards students based on effort rather than performance, and the LIFE Academy Program, which offers intensive academic daily instruction.

East Hartford has established a Student Assistance Center (SAC) to provide peer mediation, conflict resolution, counseling groups on drug and alcohol use, individual and family counseling, and academic support. The SAC approach has been recognized as an international model for best practices on school safety. Student assistance teams of teachers and college interns volunteer to assist students referred for academic and emotional support. The new Wellness Center, a collaboration between the school and the School-Based Health Center, creates a link between student's physical, mental and dental health and their physical well-being. It provides students with access to state-of-the-art fitness equipment and exercise trainers. A host of other activities keep the students safe, active and learning until 5:30 every day.

East Hartford also boasts a School-Based Health Center that operates in partnership with a local hospital and dental provider to offer comprehensive health care including physical health, mental health, nutrition, dental services, reproductive health education and weight management. The center and SAC staffs communicate regularly with the school and each other to best use resources and effectively align services to needs.

Profile: St. Paul High School, St. Paul, Virginia

Community School Model: Rural School and Community Trust

3207 Fourth Ave.
P.O. Box 976
St. Paul, VA 24283
(276) 762-5221 or (276) 762-2172
Tom Fletcher, Principal
ttletcher@wise.k12.va.us

School Demographics

- Grades: 8–12
- Enrollment: 225
- Geographic area: rural
- Ethnic/racial composition: 98% white, 1% black
- Qualify for free and reduced-price meals: 32%
- Limited English proficient: none

Community School Operations

- Initiated community school planning: 1985
- Partners: Rural School and Community Trust, Annenberg Rural Challenge, Wise County Social Services, Virginia Tech, Job Corps, Ferrum College, Lions Club, Appalachian Media Institute, Appalachian Rural Systemic Initiative
- On-site coordination/management: school principal
- Oversight/governance teams: Committee of Desired Results for Student Learning Behavior, Analysis of Instruction Committee, School and Community Committee, School Programs Review Improvement Council
- Funding sources: U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services; Department of Criminal Justice Services; federal, state and county tax revenue; Federal FiberOptics Program

Learning-Related Outcomes and Accomplishments:

- Average reading scores have increased steadily from around 55.5% 15 years ago to 77.7% in 2000 on the Stanford 9, well exceeding the county average of 50%.
- Average math scores on the Stanford 9 rose from 46.5% in 1998 to 71.6% in 2000, in contrast to the county average of 46%.
- Nearly 90% of students pass Standards of Learning state reading and writing tests in core areas in 2000–01; more than 90% pass state geometry and biology tests.
- Attendance increased from approximately 93% in the early 1990s to 99% in 2001, leading all other county schools.
- The dropout rate declined from 2.7% in 1997 to 1.47% in 2000.
- St. Paul is the only fully accredited school in the county that satisfies the state standards across all subjects on the Virginia State Standards of Learning Test.
- 50% of students transfer into St. Paul High from outside of the school district.
- Graduation rate is 94%.

St. Paul High School Overview

St. Paul High School is in a rural Appalachian town of 1,000 people. Education at St. Paul integrates the environment into the curriculum, uses community development strategies, and engages parents and other community residents.

There is a sense at St. Paul that everyone is connected, though this wasn't always the case. Several years ago, veteran principal Jim Short noticed that some students who did not participate in athletics or clubs often felt isolated. He decided that community-based service and project-based learning was a way to help such students develop a sense of belonging to the school and community, while also improving the community's perception of young people.

To this end, St. Paul High held an Appalachian Heritage Day, where older community members shared their experiences and history with students. They taught students what it was like to mine coal, make apple butter and build chain link fences. This experience led to the creation of an Appalachian ecology course, an Appalachian heritage course and a school-based local history center. To develop the center, English classes interviewed community elders and prepared their narratives, the technology class filmed seniors telling their stories, and other students used the school's TV station to produce the show.

St. Paul received funds through the Annenberg Rural Challenge to train teachers on high-quality math and science place-based learning strategies. Teachers now use the community as a laboratory to teach science and technology skills. The Appalachian ecology course undertook a long-term community development project to transform an "overgrown mud puddle" into a federally preserved wetland, while the biology II class investigated the effects of strip mining and logging on the local flora and fauna and learned about the new ecosystems that have resulted. Science and math teachers work with their colleagues from various departments to integrate these projects into their curriculum. Hands-on investigation and inquiry-based learning has proven to be a powerful way to engage students in learning.

Additionally, FiberOptics federal funds provide foreign language classes to St. Paul students. A teleconferencing system enables outside instructors to teach a course during the day, while adults have the opportunity to take distance-learning courses at home as well.

Speaking of why St. Paul High has been successful, Short says, "Everyone is involved in school here. We expect you to deliver — and so does the next teacher. Whatever it takes for that kid to successful, that's what we need to do."

Appendix B

COMMUNITY SCHOOL EVALUATIONS:

National Models

Initiative	Description of Initiative	Evaluation Design	Data Collection
Children's Aid Society	In 1989, the Children's Aid Society (CAS) partnered with the New York City Public School District and other community partners to create a comprehensive way to address the multiple challenges of students in District 6. CAS schools incorporate a strong core instructional program; enrichment activities designed to expand student learning opportunities and support their cognitive, social, emotional, moral and physical development; and a full range of physical and mental health services designed to remove barriers to learning and improve the well-being of children and families. With strong collaboration among community partners, CAS aims for high levels of parent and community involvement. Today there are five CAS schools in New York City, and the model has been adapted to approximately 100 sites nationally and internationally.	A three-year evaluation of one elementary and one middle school in their third year of implementation followed third–fifth graders and sixth–eighth graders. Outcomes in academic achievement, psychosocial characteristics and parent involvement were compared to cohorts at demographically similar noncommunity schools.	The study compared math and reading test scores, attendance rates, and suspension rates. Surveys were administered to students, teachers and parents. Observation data of schools and classrooms also were used.
School of the 21st Century	The School of the 21st Century (21C) is a school-based child care and family support model that promotes the optimal growth and development of children beginning at birth. The 21C model transforms the school into a year-round, multiservice center providing services from early morning to early evening. Since 1988, more than 1,300 schools in 20 states have implemented the program. Schools are linked to community resources to build an environment that values children. Components include all-day, year-round child care for preschoolers; before- and after-school and vacation care for school-age children; parent support programs; information and referral services; network building and training for child care providers; and health education and services.	Tracked two of the first 21C elementary schools during the second, third and fourth years of implementation and compared their impact on parents and children with two non-21C schools.	Data collected from surveys of parents, teachers, children, staff and principals and from review of school records.

DESCRIPTION, DESIGN AND FINDINGS

Sample Size of Study	Findings
	The most significant findings were that parents were more involved (78% higher at P.S. 5 and 147% higher at I.S. 218), took more responsibility for their child's schoolwork, felt welcome, and were observed to be a presence in the CAS schools more than at the comparison schools. Students at both CAS schools showed improvements in math and reading scores, though not higher than comparison students. Researchers found some evidence that participation in extended-day programs correlated with improved test scores, but the evidence has not been confirmed. Students' self-perception rating improved in both schools — self-ratings of appearance and behavior were significantly higher than those of the comparison group at the elementary school. Attitudes toward school were more positive among community school students than among the comparison group. The school environment felt more cheerful, busy and welcoming in the CAS schools. CAS teachers spent more time on class preparation and working with students, and their students had improved attendance rates. Student attendance rates were slightly higher at P.S. 5 and much higher at I.S. 218 than the elementary and middle school averages in the city.
185 21C children vs. 83 children in non-21C school	Parents who used 21C child care spent less money on child care, missed significantly less work because of failed child care arrangements and showed a significant decrease in parent stress as measured by the Parent Stress Index. The preschool child care program was credited with enabling early identification of special needs and increasing children's readiness for kindergarten.

National Models

Initiative	Description of Initiative	Evaluation Design	Data Collection
Communities In Schools	Communities In Schools (CIS) helps kids succeed in school and prepare for life. CIS believes that all children deserve five basics: a one-on-relationship with a caring adult, a safe place to learn and grow, a healthy start and a healthy future, a marketable skill to use upon graduation, and a chance to give back to peers and community. Core services include case management to bring resources and services to students at the schools. There are 179 CIS programs in 32 states, serving approximately 2,500 schools and other education sites.	Evaluated performance data from 171 programs (out of 179) on specific outcomes: attendance, behavior, academic performance, graduation, dropout rates, pursuing some form of postsecondary education, and entering the workforce or military.	CIS local programs were asked to provide data on the number of CIS students showing improvement in specific outcome areas, regardless of the nature of the assessment used to achieve those outcomes.
New York City Beacons (Phase I Study)	Beacons centers are community centers located in public school buildings, offering students and their families recreational, social service, educational enrichment and vocational activities before and after school, in the evenings, and on the weekends. Supports and services include providing safe places, leadership skills development, supervised engaging activities promoting positive behaviors and practices, adult education, parent involvement, family support, family and community service activities, and health services.	Phase I evaluated implementation, the number and kind of activities, and student participation at 39 centers.	Data collected during two rounds of site visits included focus groups with parents; participant surveys; short impromptu interviews with participant youth and adults; and numerous interviews with Beacons staff, lead agency supervisors and principals.
New York City Beacons (Phase II Study)	Same as above. Phase II was an intensive study of how the Beacons initiative affected youth and parents, the schools, and the surrounding communities in six sites. Researchers also looked at how variations in quality related to differences in youth behaviors.	Intensive study of the impact on youth, parents, schools and community and the effect of variation in quality at six sites. Sites were ranked according to quality and divided into quartiles. Researchers randomly selected one site from the top quartile, two each from the middle quartiles and one from the bottom quartile.	Surveys of youth and school staff and a community poll at all sites. Four of the six "qualitative study sites" received regular observation of all Beacons activities, interviews and surveys with youth and adult participants, and focus groups with youth.

Sample Size of Study	Findings
171 local programs	Seventy-eight percent of CIS-tracked students improved their attendance; 60% had fewer incidents of discipline (71% for high school students); 76% of students improved their academic performance; 88% of CIS-tracked students were promoted to the next grade level; and 86% of eligible CIS seniors graduated from high school. The overall dropout rate for CIS students was 4%, lower than the national average and lower than the estimated 6% to 10% dropout rate for similar student populations. CIS programs that track students after graduation found that two-thirds of their students continued on to some form of postsecondary education, and nearly three in 10 entered the work force.
Phase I: 39 centers in schools	Eighty-five percent of youth reported feeling safe at the Beacons centers. In 73% of Beacons centers, youth are involved in organizing and carrying out activities and events. Evaluators judged that participants appeared to be interested/engaged in at least 90% of activities. Eighty-nine percent of Beacons centers have a youth council. Eighty percent of youth interviewed found that the Beacons centers helped avoid drug use; 74% found that the centers helped them avoid fighting. Seventy-five percent of youth said the centers helped them do better in school and 72% said they helped them to become leaders. Two-thirds of Beacons centers review student report cards and half reported that their staff shares the student's progress with the parents. More than half communicate between their staff and the participant's classroom teachers. Eighty-seven percent of Beacons centers offer adult education opportunities, 67% provide parent counseling or parent support groups, 40% offer preventive services programs for family with social/emotional problems, 33% have additional police protection on site, and 39% have escorts for younger participants to get to the centers. Fifty-seven percent of Beacons centers involve youth in community service months and 32% involve adults in these activities. Seventy-two percent offer substance abuse prevention programs, 56% offer drug counseling and 31% have on-site self-help services. Seventy-four percent offer sex education, 69% offer pregnancy and HIV prevention programs, 28% offer health services on site, and 44% offer mental health services on site with 77% offering referrals off site.
	The Beacons centers offer young people a safe place to develop through interesting and challenging activities. The quality of youth development approaches embedded in the activities made a difference in the youths' outcomes. Higher-quality programs found that youth were more likely to feel better about themselves, to believe that youth of all races were valued at Beacons centers, to perceive that staff had high expectations for their behavior and performance, and to report that the Beacons center helped them learn leadership skills. They were less likely to report intentionally hurting someone physically, purposefully damaging other people's property, stealing money or getting into a fight. They found that homework help and academic support are vital aspects of the Beacons program — youth frequently responded that the homework assistance was what they liked most about the Beacons centers and why they would recommend it to their friends. Parents of youth attending the Beacons centers cited the Beacons workshops and counseling for aiding them in communicating better with their children and their children's teachers. More than 50% of responding parents reported attending meetings and activities in their children's schools. Community residents who know of the Beacons centers had a somewhat more positive perspective on the social cohesion of their neighborhood. They were more likely to agree that people looked out for each other's children and that people did not isolate themselves in their communities.

State-Funded/Statewide Models

Initiative	Description of Initiative	Evaluation Design	Data Collection
California Healthy Start	Established by the California legislature in 1991, Healthy Start offers school districts and their collaborative partners seed money to fund long-term change initiatives to improve the well-being and academic performance of young people, families and communities. Services at or near the school site promote health, educational and social development of children. Core clients are children and families most in need of services. Types of services provided include academic (tutorial, truancy counseling, adult basic education, youth development, ESL, extended day care and early childhood education); health (immunizations, screening and referrals); and mental health (psychological evaluations, counseling and outpatient substance abuse treatment programs). As of the 1999 evaluation, there were 469 operational grantees with 1,122 associated schools. Healthy Start programs are located in 49 of the 58 counties in California, in both rural and urban areas.	Evaluated program impact on one cycle of funded grantees for inclusion in the 1999 study. Designed to assess the extent to which the initiative helped build local capacity to provide integrated services for families and the results that the grantees achieved in outcomes areas for children, families, schools and communities.	Baseline measurements were taken at the beginning of the program's operation and were compared to changes in the indicators measured each subsequent year. The grantees submitted school-wide data for each school; data on clients who have been identified for intensive coordinated services; attendance, suspension and expulsion rates; and standardized test scores for fourth, eighth and 12th grades.
Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Program	Family Resource and Youth Services Centers are designed to help families and children solve nonacademic problems that interfere with student learning. Core services at elementary and middle schools include full-time preschool/child care for 2- and 3-year-olds; after-school and summer child care for 4- to 12-year-olds; home visits and new parent support; parent literacy and education programs; support and training for child care providers; and direct provision or referral to health services. Youth Services Centers offer referrals to health and social services; employment counseling, training and placement for older youth; counseling for drug and alcohol abuse; family crisis management; and mental health.	Analyzed performance of 20 centers in six areas: needs assessment, relationship with school, relationship with community, relationship with families, advisory council and mission focus and on 11 teacher survey items considered as potential predictor variables.	Qualitative and quantitative data were collected through site-based observation, interviews and teacher surveys, as well as from analysis of an automated information system used by all centers to track key participant and program information.

Sample Size of Study	Findings
One hundred thirty-eight grantees out of 156.	The 1996 SRI study found that Healthy Start reached those people it intended to, and provided a large number and variety of services. Student behavior, performance and school climate improved in Healthy Start schools. Families' unmet needs for basic goods and services were cut in half. Findings from the 1999 evaluation show that academic results for students most in need significantly increased: Reading test scores for the lowest-performing schools increased by 25% and math scores by 50%. Middle and high school students who were most in need improved their grade point averages by almost 50%, from .8 to 1.2. In the area of basic needs (housing, food, clothing, shelter, transportation, employment), there was a substantial movement upward from the "in crisis" and "at risk" scores on the scale to the "stable" scores. Students decreased their drug use; improved their self-esteem; and increased their perception of support from parents, classmates, teachers and friends. Family violence decreased and parents developed a greater awareness of child and youth development and the differing needs at each stage. There was a slight drop in the absentee rate, but it was not significant. The mean number of volunteer hours that parents contributed to the school increased by 35%, from 3,074 to 4,143 hours. For more severe case-managed clients who had an extremely high rate of absenteeism (median = 17 days) at baseline, there was a decrease of more than 20% at follow-up, down to 13 days.
Twenty centers	This 1999 study found similar results on student performance as a 1997 evaluation: Teachers felt that the performance of students improved in terms of completing classwork and homework, following directions and obeying school rules, interacting with peers, and cooperating with others. Teachers did not see improvements in class attendance or tardiness. There weren't adequate data to make a clear link between the services provided by the centers and improved grades or test scores. The 1999 analysis of the services and of the perceptions of parents and teachers clearly suggested that these 20 centers effectively helped families and students deal with nonacademic problems that placed them "at risk for negative outcomes" in school. However, no overall connection could be established between the centers and objective measures of improved performance in school.

State-Funded/Statewide Models

Initiative	Description of Initiative	Evaluation Design	Data Collection
New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program	The New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program (NJSBYSP) is a state-funded initiative providing a range of services for adolescents at or near their schools, with at least one project located in every county of New Jersey. Core services available to every student with parental permission include individual and family counseling; primary and preventive health services; drug and alcohol abuse counseling; employment counseling, training and placement; and recreation. Sites managed by other lead agencies offer pregnancy prevention, teen parent support, violence prevention, academic support and positive youth development.	At six school sites, students using program services beginning at the start of ninth grade were followed for two years and compared to nonparticipants. This was the second phase of a two-part evaluation to learn about program operation and its impact on youth.	Quantitative data collected from confidential student survey conducted at beginning of ninth and end of 10th grades. Qualitative data consisted of student interviews and focus groups.
Illinois Project Success	Project Success (PS) is an Illinois initiative designed to help children succeed in school by providing health and social services supports for children and their families. Six fundamental outcomes include improvements in parent involvement, collaboration, school-based school-linked services, school attendance, decreased truancy and academic achievement. The initiative began in six sites (each site targets eight schools) in 1992, and by 2001 was funded in 89 counties. In 2002, the state elected not to continue its funding, but many schools continue to do the work of the Project Success Initiative.	Compared attendance and academic achievement in 16 high-performing PS schools (only those that had been participating for at least two years and where principals reported high levels of PS implementation) with 47 schools with similar student populations.	Collected test scores in third- and sixth-grade reading and math; also obtained board of education school attendance rates for all schools from 1992 through 1998. Principals' and parents' perceptions of PS impact were surveyed.
Washington Readiness to Learn	Readiness to Learn's (RTL) mission is to create a committed, continuing partnership among schools, families and communities that provides opportunities for all youth to achieve at their highest learning potential; live in a safe, healthy, civil environment; and grow into productive community members. The initiative's primary goal is for children and youth to be successful in school. The RTL initiative emerged from grassroots efforts of community forums, town meetings, local community advocates and state leaders. Twenty-four local consortia across Washington state received RTL grant funds to implement comprehensive, responsive service plans that were responsive to the needs of children, youth and their families. The planning for these services was a collaborative effort by many partners to deliver these services.	Studied impact of the RTL program at 24 centers serving multiple schools across six categories: education of child, basic needs, parent involvement, family functioning/mental health, physical health and employment/adult education.	Outcome and qualitative data collected from site visits; analysis of RTL data collection forms detailing services provided, child demographic information, school performance data and teacher ratings; and client satisfaction interviews. Pre and postcomparisons were made for school-related child outcomes comparing teacher ratings when children are first referred for services and when service delivery ends or the school year is over.

Sample Size of Study	Findings
Nine hundred twenty-two students took both the baseline survey at the beginning of ninth grade and the follow-up survey at the end of 10th grade.	Ninety-one percent of students saw NJSBYSP as a place "where student with problems can get help" and 89% felt it was a place where "there are adults who care about kids and really listen to them." Students taking part in NJSBYSP had a greater decrease in self-reported destructive behaviors and a less steep decline in responsible sexual behavior than did nonparticipants. Students in the program also displayed a statistically positive effect on educational aspirations and credit accumulation.
Four hundred sixteen principals took the principal perception survey; 1,700 parents at 56 schools took the parent perception survey.	Standardized test scores in reading for third and sixth graders were significantly higher in high-implementation Project Success sites than in comparison schools. The percentage of students not meeting state standards in reading was significantly lower in both reading and math. Math scores improved, but not at statistically significant levels. Half or more of parents at all responding PS schools say they now play a more active role in their child's education, are more confident in their role as their child's teacher and report higher self-confidence levels in their children.
Children: 6,026; families: 4,871.	Seventy-seven percent of families surveyed were very satisfied with the assistance Readiness to Learn provided them, and more than 69% reported that their children would definitely perform better because of the help they had received. Various outcomes were seen across the six categories, with 71% of families reporting an improvement in their child's education. Teacher ratings show that students who were referred to RTL for academic reasons significantly improved their academic performance. Students referred for other reasons also significantly improved but by a smaller margin, mainly because their baseline was higher and had less room to improve. Similarly, grade point averages for middle and high school students referred to RTL improved significantly. Teachers reported that at follow-up, attendance improved significantly for all grade levels of students who were referred for that particular problem. Behavioral problems (determined by teachers' ratings of student behavior, number of office referrals or detentions, and number of days students were suspended) were significantly reduced by follow-up for students referred for behavior for all grade levels, especially middle and high school. The majority of respondents said that RTL staff had a great impact on the school's supportive learning environment. In terms of building partnerships, 70% of the schools partnered with a community agency to provide supports services and programs.

State-Funded/Statewide Models

Initiative	Description of Initiative	Evaluation Design	Data Collection
Texas Alliance Schools	Since 1991, the Alliance Schools Initiative has focused on bringing parents together with teachers and community leaders to try to solve problems in schools, learn about school reform practices, and work together to address the needs of children and their families. The initiative focuses on restructuring the relationship among stakeholders in school communities, including parents, teachers, school administrators, students, community and business leaders, and public officials. The initiative teaches the art of communication — exchanging ideas, debate and compromise — in order to change the culture of schools and neighborhoods. The strategy increases parental engagement, teacher morale and student success at Alliance school campuses. During the 1999–2000 school year, there were 129 Alliance Schools serving 89,994 students in 20 Texas school districts. Texas Industrial Areas Foundation organizations lobbied the Texas Legislature since 1993 to provide $14 million in 1999 to the Investment Capital Fund, which directly funds schools committed to reform though local control and accountability.	Compared state test scores at 84 Alliance Schools and 59 Veteran Alliance schools (with three or more years experience as an Alliance School) to non-Alliance School state test score averages.	Analysis of Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) test scores.
Urban School Initiative School Age Child Care Project (SACC)	One hundred twenty-five school-age care centers in 17 urban Ohio school districts have implemented quality school age child care programs. Core components included in each program are innovative educational activities that support and expand upon the school day curriculum; daily time for homework help and tutoring with a special emphasis on academic enrichment in reading, math, computer use and other areas; choices of experiences each day; access to educational/enrichment materials and supplies; a nutritious snack/meal every day; low child-to-adult ratios; and quality staff.	Evaluation looked at students and families from 10 of the 17 centers. Compared school and family outcomes of participants in the SACC program to averages of students in all Ohio urban schools and to students who did not receive school age child care. Researchers measured progress over two time periods — fall 1998 and spring 1999.	Surveys of SACC workers, teachers of children in SACC programs, parents, and children in kindergarten through eighth grade. Field notes and data collected at site visits. Data on school attendance, grades, suspensions, expulsions and standardized test scores.

Sample Size of Study	Findings
	Looking at 1999 and 2000 TAAS scores at 84 Alliance Schools, TAAS pass rates improved at more than double the state rate for math (+4.3 vs. +1.8), reading (+3.6 vs. +1.1) and writing (+2.4 vs. +.3), as well as for students passing all tests (+4.6 vs. +1.8). Even more significant, pass rates for economically disadvantaged Alliance School students improved at a greater rate than for all Alliance School students and at more than double the rate of the state's disadvantaged students (+7.8 vs. +2.5). The TAAS pass rates for Veteran Alliance School students from 1998 and 2000 improved at well — more than double the pace of the state for math, reading and writing, as well as for students passing all tests. In particular, the pass rate for the math TAAS increased by 8.2% for all Alliance students and by 8.8% for economically disadvantaged Alliance students, compared to only 3.2% in the state overall and 2.5% for the state's disadvantaged students.
Ten sites	Positive educational impacts: Reduced school absence and tardiness for participating SACC students. SACC first graders who were not in a SACC program during kindergarten reduced the number of missed school days from an average of eight during their kindergarten year to an average of three days in first grade. SACC eighth graders who were not in a SACC program in seventh grade reduced the average number of school days missed from 18 to five. Homework completed/turned in and classroom grades were positively affected, as reported by both teachers and parents. SACC elementary and middle school students reduced their suspensions and expulsions from the 1997–98 school year to the 1998–99. SACC fourth and sixth graders exceeded the statewide percentages of students meeting proficient standards on the Ohio Proficiency Test. SACC sixth graders exceeded the statewide percentages of students meeting proficient standards in writing, reading, mathematics and citizenship. Only in science did the SACC sixth graders' scores fall slightly below the statewide percentages of students meeting proficient standards. School buildings housing SACC programs were used more effectively because of these programs. SACC children's television and video viewing decreased because children had a safe, supervised environment before and after school. Parents felt the program had a positive impact on their families. Some adult family members reported moving into a school district specifically because of the SACC program. Positive community impacts included new school-community agency partnerships in Ohio's urban areas. Adults in the participating children's families reported a greater awareness of community agencies, their facilities and their services because of the SACC programs. Families also reported that their children enjoyed community facilities they had not previously known about or had not be able to afford and that adults were able to work additional hours or move from part-time to full-time employment because of available and affordable child care.

School District/Local Initiatives

Initiative	Description of Initiative	Evaluation Design	Data Collection
Achievement Plus	Achievement Plus schools employ a standards-based curriculum based on the America's Choice model. Teachers undergo in-depth training and professional development. Core activities include before- and after-school extended learning programs, family resource centers, family programming, attendance programs, and health and social services. Extended learning opportunities for students are linked to teaching and learning. The school is a hub for the community to provide services and supports to students and families, reducing barriers to learning and achievement. Three Achievement Plus schools have opened in St. Paul, MN.	Tracked standardized test scores over each year of implementation at three Achievement Plus schools to determine mastery of state standards and improvements over time and to look for effects of participation in extended learning activities on test score improvement.	Tracked third- and fifth-grade scores on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment in reading, writing and math. Also looked at the Metropolitan Achievement Test scores to compare students in second grade and higher on reading and math performance.
Boston Excels	The Boston Excels model is an initiative of the Home for Little Wanderers. Boston Excels addresses the comprehensive needs of young people, families and their schools by partnering with them to provide effective social services, a prevention team of clinicians and social workers, and opportunities that engage and empower parents and the community. Currently there are five Boston Excels schools in the Boston area.	Tracked participation of student and adults in Boston Excels schools and programs.	Collected student achievement data, attendance records for programs and services, and school attendance rates.
Center for School Change Initiative	Twenty rural school/community collaborative projects that bring community resources into schools, connect students and schools to their communities, build community pride in students and communities, make school facilities more accessible for community use, and pool resources to create facilities and programs that benefit both schools and community.	Assessed the nature of community engagement (and community impact) at 10 collaborative project sites.	Site visits, with repeated visits to a few sites for intensive study. Survey data from parents, teaches, students and administrators.
Dallas Youth and Family Centers Program	The centers provide physical and mental health care to students and their families at nine locations, each serving multiple schools, throughout the Dallas School District. Core services include mental health care, counseling, case management, family-home involvement programs, youth development activities, and family education and family planning workshops.	Evaluated nine centers to determine which services were used and who used them, participant satisfaction, and impact on students' educational outcomes.	Center data on type/amount of services used was analyzed alongside school data (i.e., test scores, discipline, attendance). Surveys of parents, students, center staff and teachers.

Sample Size of Study	Findings
	In 2001, the number of students scoring at or above Level II rose by approximately 20 percentage points for third and fifth graders at Dayton's Elementary School and for third graders at Monroe Elementary School. Fifth graders at Dayton's performing above grade level increased their scores by 14 percentage points. Johnson Elementary School was in its first year of operation, so results were only available for 2001. More than 80% of fifth graders there scored at Level II or above in reading, writing and math. No strong or consistent relationship between higher levels of extended learning attendance and achievement gain was found; however there were some positive correlations, particularly at Monroe.
Five Boston Excels schools	Boston Excels children do better in school: During the first three years at a Boston Excels pilot school, the number of students with reading scores above the 60th percentile increased by 115%. In 2000, one of the Boston Excels schools had the greatest improvement in Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System test scores of all Boston Public Schools. Teachers at one school report that 100% of children in the Excels literacy after-school program performed better in school. Principals, teachers, parents and school records report decreased student disciplinary incidents. Parents have improved their capacity to care for their families: Excels parents have completed English for Speakers of Other Languages classes, have obtained jobs or found better jobs, have applied for and received U.S. citizenship, and have become paid parent organizers or trainers. Excels school principals credit Boston Excels for dramatically improving home-school engagement.
Ten collaboratives	Leaders of successful school/community collaborative projects are skilled at dealing with ambiguity and complexity; flexible in the face of unforeseen obstacles and opportunities; and skilled at working with adults as well as children, in teams as well as independently. They also possess a rich network of community contacts that they actively nurture.
During the 2000–01 school year, 11,272 Dallas School District students made 36,899 service visits to the Youth and Family Centers.	Survey findings show that most principals were aware of the centers' services. More than 97% of family members were satisfied with the services, and 92% were satisfied with their own or their children's progress since coming to the centers. Almost 97% of students were satisfied with the services they had received, and more than 89% of them said their personal and/or family situation had improved. Nearly all of the school personnel surveyed (97.4%) recognized the centers as a "valuable resource" for students and their families. Elementary students with three or more absences in one six-week period who received physical health services showed a statistically and practically significant 52.4% decline in absences. Students who received mental health and related services showed small declines (not practically significant) in school absences. Students who received mental health and related services showed a large, statistically and practically significant 85.3% decline in school discipline referrals. Students in grades four–eight improved their scores from the previous year on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills reading and mathematics tests. They also showed small gains overall in their scores on the 2001 Stanford 9 Achievement Tests for reading and math.

School District/Local Initiatives

Initiative	Description of Initiative	Evaluation Design	Data Collection
Bridges to Success	Bridges to Success (BTS), an initiative of the United Way of Central Indiana, works to strengthen connections and share resources among school, parents and community institutions. By creating partnerships, BTS aims to increase access to health and human services and youth development opportunities; reduce risk factors that impact student achievement; and increase the number of students who attend school and graduate. BTS engages families, youth, neighborhoods, agencies and schools in developing systems in their own communities to bring these supports into the schools. A coordinator manages the multiple resources and leads a community council that works with school staff to develop effective programs. Currently there are 41 BTS schools in the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS).	Compared average performance of BTS students to IPS non-BTS students, students from Marion County, and students from public schools within the Indianapolis Metropolitan Statistical Area (IMAS), which includes nine surrounding counties, on the 2000–01 Indiana Standardized Test of Educational Progress (ISTEP). Determined how they performed relative to how the Indiana Department of Education predicted schools would score. These scores were based upon a model used by the Indiana Department of Education using various cognitive and social economic parameters.	Obtained student outcome data on the 2000–01 ISTEP, as well as average attendance, expulsion and suspension rates from the Indiana Department of Education. The average attendance was calculated by taking the individual schools reported attendance rate times the number of school days times the enrollment. This value was totaled, yielding a total number of student days attended and divided by the total school days times enrollment to get the average for that set of schools. The suspension and expulsion rates were determined by taking the individual school enrollment times the number of school days and adding these numbers. The total reported suspensions and expulsions were then used to determine the rate per 100 school enrollment days.
LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program	LA's BEST is a comprehensive after-school intervention program that provides activities to meet specific educational, social and motivational goals. The program has expanded to 69 sites and is available from the end of the school day until 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, at no cost to parents. Sites are selected based on educational needs: low achievement, low economic status of the community, and high gang or crime rates in the neighborhood. Goals of the program for students in kindergarten through fifth grade are to provide a safe environment after school, educational enrichment activities to support and augment the regular-day program, recreational activities, and interpersonal skills and self-esteem development. Homework assistance, field trips and performing arts also are emphasized. Students are expected to enroll and participate on a regular basis.	Several evaluations, beginning in 1990, asked, "Is there a difference in performance between LA's BEST students and those in the same school with no program participation?" The evaluations compared a sample of 4,312 LA's BEST students to 15,010 nonparticipants. Evaluators looked at length of time that a student had participated and divided students into categories that reflected their program involvement. Linear regression and path-analysis techniques were used to examine the effect of program participation on the variables of interest.	Collected student data (attendance, student mobility, redesignation as English language proficient, course-taking patterns and standardized test scores); demographic information; and data about intensity and duration of participation in LA's BEST.

Sample Size of Study	Findings
36 Bridges to Success Schools; averages from IPS, Marion County schools and IMAS.	Although BTS students performed almost equally or slightly lower than IPS non-BTS students on the ISTEP in reading comprehension and vocabulary, Bridges students outperformed them in attendance, expulsions and suspensions. BTS averages were better than or slightly lower than average rates from the county and the larger surrounding area. Average BTS attendance rates were 94.49% compared to 93.67% for IPS non-BTS schools, 95.37% for Marion County and 95.58% for IMAS. BTS schools had expulsion rates per 100 days of 1.23 compared to 3.22 for IPS non-BTS schools, 2.60 for Marion County and 2.98 for IMAS. BTS schools had much lower suspension rates than all comparison groups: 20.76 vs. 43.36 for IPS non-BTS, 41.18 for Marion County and 45.98 for IMAS. More BTS schools performed "far above" the predicted level on the total aggregate scores on the ISTEP than IPS non-BTS schools: 9.46% vs. 7.23%. 15.32% of BTS schools performed "above" predicted levels and 45.05% performed near expected levels.
Sample of LA's BEST students: 4,312. Sample of non-LA's BEST students: 15,010.	A 1990 survey found that three-quarters of parents of LA's BEST students worried significantly less about their children's safety and that participation in the program has resulted in "somewhat" to "very positive" changes in students' ability to get along with others, grades on homework and test, attitudes toward school, communication skills, and knowledge about specific subjects. A 1992–94 longitudinal study showed 83% of students liking school more and reporting higher future aspirations, a sense of belonging and acceptance in the program, and awareness of adult concern. The 1994–95 study, which followed students with at least four years of program involvement, found that higher participation was significantly related to positive achievement on math, reading and language arts standardized test scores (when the influence of gender, ethnicity, income and language status was controlled). For cohorts starting in grades two, three, four or five, more program participation was related to better attendance (when controlling for demographic factors). Using path analysis, results showed that a higher level of participation was linked to better school attendance, which in turn related to higher academic achievement on math, reading and language arts standardized tests. Evaluators were unable to separate out the impact of LA's BEST activities from regular school activities, or to determine which of its various activities were most effective. Students' responses suggested that they generally felt a sense of belonging and acceptance in the program. They felt that adults cared for them and had high hopes for them. A second evaluation compared LA's BEST fourth graders to non-LA's BEST participants from the same school, and found that the former group had more favorable language redesignation rates. Significantly reduced rates of absenteeism were seen for the fifth-grade cohort as they moved to sixth and seventh grades, though no differences were detected in the eighth and ninth grades.

School District/Local Initiatives

Initiative	Description of Initiative	Evaluation Design	Data Collection
Hamilton County Families and Children First Council	The Children First Plan is a comprehensive school-based preventative program now located in 12 schools. After a planning process that included more than 100 members of the social service community and 50 community focus groups, the plan was implemented in schools in 1997. It initially was a three-year pilot project, but has been extended and expanded for an additional three years, currently in year six. It aims to provide full-service schools that promote academic achievement, ensure good physical and mental health, and encourage positive youth development and family involvement. Each school houses a coordinator to develop integrated programs and to manage the various agency resources. This program uses pooled funding from 12 agencies and contracts with more than 35 agencies for services and resources. Its priorities are to reduce high school dropout rates, reduce the number of abused and neglected children, reduce suspension and truancies in preschool through sixth grade, and increase students' feelings of school connectedness.	The evaluation asked, "What effects do the interventions have on the students in the target schools and their neighborhood?" The 12 Children First schools are paired with comparison schools and neighborhoods. The evaluation compares pertinent indicators between target schools/neighborhoods and demographically matched comparison schools.	Data sources were demographic information that collaborating agencies already maintain, teacher intervention reports, a school connectedness survey and individual program evaluations (each school offers an average of 28 programs).
Polk Bros. Full Service School Initiative	The Full Service School Initiative (FSSI) aimed to improve the physical and psychological well-being of children in three elementary or middle schools in order to make a positive impact on their school-related behavior and academic achievement. The objectives were to improve access to recreation, education, social service and health programs by developing an integrated and coordinated service delivery mechanism at each school; to involve school faculty and staff, students, parents, and community and nonprofit representatives in a joint decision-making process regarding programs and services in or near the school and in monitoring their success so that each takes ownership of the process; to improve the relationship between parents and school staff; and to create a mutually supportive environment where classroom and social support services work together to enhance student achievement. The initiative required schools to work with a lead partner agency.	The three-year study focused on outcomes for students, parents, schools and communities at three schools. Outcomes were compared to demographically similar schools and to the Chicago Public School system as a whole from 1995 to 1999.	The Comer School Climate Survey and the Neighborhood Resource Survey were administered to students in grades three–eight, teachers and parents each year. Data sources included collected aggregate school data from the Chicago Public School databases; interviews with key informants three times a year for three years; and focus groups with parents, teachers and students.

Sample Size of Study	Findings
Twelve schools	Overall, teachers and principals were satisfied with the Children First program. Ninety-six percent of teachers responding to the survey would recommend implementing the plan in other schools. Several principals reported success in increasing school connectedness. Within Cycle 1 schools (the original pilot schools), the Children First program had been integrated into the core school program. Seventy-nine percent of parents of first–third graders reported attending three out of six possible types of school activities. Although absence rates have significantly decreased in three schools, some of the schools have increased rates and some have no change. Three schools significantly decreased their truancy rates, and most reduced their suspension rates. High school dropout rates in one of the original Children First schools decreased from 23.7% in year one to 12.8% in year four.
1997: 653 students, 46 teachers, 201 parents. 1998: 373 students, 43 teachers, 86 parents. 1999: 724 students, 25 teachers, 86 parents.	Rates of attendance and truancy were similar to comparison schools and better than Chicago Public Schools. Mobility was lower in FSSI schools, with a steeper rate of decline by 1999. Standardized reading test scores improved at rates exceeding the citywide average at all three FSSI schools. Two out of the three FSSI schools significantly exceeded the citywide math test scores and marginally exceeded the comparison schools. The third school reversed a downward trend in math scores and reached the city average by 1999. The number of teachers involved in planning/providing after-school activities increased by 20% at all three schools. Surveys in 1999 showed that students viewed staff as better-informed about after-school programs and more helpful to students. Student participants in the FSSI schools reported more relationships with supportive adults in after-school settings than did nonparticipants; participating students also reporting a feeling of improved safety at their schools by 1999.

School District/Local Initiatives

Initiative	Description of Initiative	Evaluation Design	Data Collection
Schools Uniting Neighborhoods	The Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) initiative works through partnerships with local schools, districts and community organizations to improve the lives of children, their families and their communities. Founded by the City of Portland and Multnomah County in 1999, in partnership with the State of Oregon and Multnomah County Public School Districts, the initiative began with eight schools and has grown to 15. SUN schools extend the school day from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm and serve as community centers. They link with libraries, parks, community centers, churches, neighborhood health clinics and business for services and resources. They offer an array of services and activities, primarily before- and after-school academic and enrichment programs that are linked with the school day; family involvement and strengthening programs; health and social services for students, families and community; community events; and adult education opportunities.	Each SUN school goal was evaluated in a different way with different evaluators.	Student test scores and grades were collected. Multiple family and neighborhood involvement surveys were administered to families; evaluators also conducted focus groups with students. A multilingual survey was administered door-to-door to more than 700 residents with and without school-aged children. Stakeholder interviews and primary document analysis was done to determine community collaboration. Surveys of school activities, events and services helped to determine resource use.

Community School Initiatives Evaluation Reports

Achievement Plus: Achievement Plus Annual Report 2000–01. St. Paul, MN: Achievement Plus. Available by calling Maria Lamb, Executive Director of Achievement Plus, at (651) 642-4070.

Boston Excels: Internally tracked data available from Matthew Lipuma, Home for Little Wanderers, Project Excel. Available by calling (617) 927-0613 or e-mailing mlipuma@thehome.org.

California Healthy Start: *Healthy Start Works — Evaluation Report: A Statewide Profile of Healthy Start Sites* (1999). California Department of Education, Healthy Start Field Office. Available at www.cde.ca.gov/healthystart/eval/evalworks.htm.

Center for School Change: Scheie, D.M., and Williams, T. (2001). *Strengthening Schools and Communities through Collaboration: Final Evaluation Report on School/Community Collaboration in the Center for School Change's Phase II Grant Sites, 1997–2000.* Minneapolis: Rainbow Research, Inc.

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Sample Size of Study	Findings
Eight SUN schools and comparison schools	Math scores are higher at SUN elementary schools, but the reverse is true for middle schools. Over three years, math scores significantly increased in grades three and four, but decreased in grades six and eight. In reading, there was an upward trend for grades three–five — fourth graders scored significantly higher than comparison group students. There was no difference on absenteeism or disciplinary referrals between SUN and comparison group students. Community knowledge of the SUN program grew from 8.6% in 2000 to 41.1% in 2001. The number of partnerships increased from 70 to 120. Partners were more likely to contribute resources and volunteer support after a year in the SUN program. Ninety-five percent of community members agreed that involvement is important. SUN made significant progress in the number and types of programs offered and their attendance levels and 76% of all programs used materials, supplies or equipment from partnering agencies.

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Kentucky's School Based Family Resource and Youth Services Centers: Kalafat, J., Illback, R.J., and Sanders, D. (1999). *Evaluation of Kentucky's School Based Family Resource and Youth Services Centers. Part II: Exploratory Analysis of Relationships between Implementation Features and Educational Outcomes.* Louisville, KY: R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville, Inc.. Available at www.reachoflouisville.com/FRYSC.htm.

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New York City Beacons: Warren, C., Brown, P., and Freudenberg, N. (2001). *Evaluation of the New York City Beacons: Phase II Findings.* New York: Academy for Educational Development. Available at www.aed.org.

Polk Bros. Full Service School Initiative: Whalen, S. (2002). *Report of the Evaluation of the Polk Bros. Foundation's Full Service School Initiative.* Chicago: Chapin Hall Center for Children, University of Chicago.

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Schools Uniting Neighborhoods: Kowalski, S. (2002). *SUN Second Evaluation Report: School Year 2000–2001.* Portland, OR: Schools Uniting Neighborhoods, Multnomah County.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: GENERAL

Planning a Community School

Building a Community School, 3rd Edition
Children's Aid Society

A detailed look of the Children's Aid Society's current work in New York City and suggestions for building and sustaining partnerships, planning a community school program, and funding these efforts. It also provides new chapters outlining the research base that supports the Children's Aid Society's community school model and greater detail on available funding resources. Available at www.communityschools.org/Manual.html.

CBO Schools: Profiles in Transformational Education
Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, Academy for Educational Development

This book shares stories of 11 schools operated by community-based organizations. These schools combine effective educational practices and youth development principles to create relevant learning environments for students of all backgrounds and abilities. Available by calling (202) 884-8267 or e-mailing cyd@aed.org. For more information, visit www.transformationaleducation.org.

Collaboration Module and Destination Sustainability Module
California Center for Community School Partnerships — Healthy Start Office

The collaboration module is designed for both new and veteran community school partners seeking to create and maintain sustainable partner relationships; the destination sustainability module is designed for community school partners seeking to sustain funding for the long haul. Both modules are comprehensive tool kits with a guidebook, charts and a CD-ROM. $50 each. Available by calling (530) 752-1277 or at http://ccc-sp.ucdavis.edu.

Community Assessment Framework
Public Education Network

A guide for organizing data and developing strategies for strong school/community partnerships. Available at www.publiceducation.org/sc-commassessment.asp.

Community Schools in Illinois: Partnerships Promoting Academic Excellence and Lifelong Development
Community Collaboration Project, Voices for Illinois' Children

This report describes Illinois' vision of a community school and its benefits to multiple stakeholders. It outlines successes of Illinois community schools and recommends strategies to promote a statewide community school strategy. Available at www.voices4kids.org/communityschools.pdf.

Cost Worksheet for Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives
Finance Project

This worksheet is intended to help site leaders identify the range of costs that out-of-school time and community school initiatives incur, and develop cost estimates for continuing and/or expanding their work. Available at www.financeproject.org/costworksheet.htm.

Education and Community Building: Connecting Two Worlds
Institute for Educational Leadership

This report breaks new ground by helping educators and community leaders understand and respect the assets and talents that each brings to the goal of improving student learning. It presents several "sticking points" and identifies "rules of engagement" to facilitate better communication between school and community. Available at www.communityschools.org/combuild.pdf or for $7 from iel@iel.org.

Improving Public Schools and Expanding After School Opportunities
National League of Cities

These action kits feature opportunities for municipal leadership in education. They are particularly relevant for municipal leaders engaged in the work of community schools and helpful for community school advocates working to inform and influence local elected officials. Available at www.nlc.org/nlc_org/site/programs/institute_for_youth_education_and_families/institute_programs.cfm.

Inside Full-Service Community Schools
Joy Dryfoos and Sue Maguire

This book is a step-by-step practitioner's guide to integrating health, family support, youth development and other community services to support student learning, and is an extraordinary contribution to the community schools' movement. Available at www.communityschools.org/insideschools.html.

Learning Together: The Developing Field of School-Community Initiatives
Atelia Melaville for the Institute for Educational Leadership and National Center for Community Education

This book identifies the major types, purposes and strategies of a national cross-section of 20 school-community initiatives, and explores the dynamics of implementing, sustaining and expanding these initiatives across several key dimensions, including governance, site coordination and staffing, financing, and accountability. Free. Available from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation at (800) 645-1766 or infocenter@mott.org.

Making Education THE Priority
John Begala, Federation for Community Planning

This article makes the case that education should be the overriding priority for health and social service organizations for many years to come. Available at www.fcp.org/ep/pa/PAV54N11.pdf.

Schools and Community-Based Organizations Working Together
Chicago, IL, and Portland, OR, Requests for Proposals

School districts across the country are partnering with community-based organizations and agencies to create community schools. Examples of two requests for proposals used by the Chicago Public School District and Portland Public School District, in conjunction with the city of Portland and Multnomah County, describe the elements necessary for participating agencies and schools interested in beginning community-school partnerships. Chicago Campaign to Expand Community Schools: www.communityschools.org/chicagorfp.pdf. Schools Uniting Neighborhoods: www.sunschools.org/pdf/rfp.pdf.

Strengthening Partnerships: Community School Assessment Checklist
Coalition for Community Schools and the Finance Project

This checklist contains tools to assist school and community leaders in creating and strengthening community school partnerships. The first tool helps assess the development of the partnership; the second helps take an inventory of existing programs and services in or connected to the school. Available at www.communityschools.org/assessmentnew.pdf.

School Facilities Planning

For Generations to Come: A Community Leadership Guide to Renew Public School Buildings
21st Century School Fund

This guide provides a framework and a five-step process for community involvement in the complex venture of modernizing or building new public school buildings. Available by calling (202) 745-3745 or at www.21csf.org.

Schools as Centers of Community: A Citizen's Guide for Planning and Design
U.S. Department of Education

The citizen's guide outlines a practical process for engaging all educational stakeholders in the process

of planning schools that more adequately address the needs of the whole learning community. Available at www.cefpi.org/pdf/schools.pdf.

Small Schools

Dollars and Sense: The Cost Effectiveness of Small Schools

Knowledge Works Foundation, the Rural Schools and Community Trust, and Concordia, Inc.

This paper challenges the common belief that big schools are cheaper to build and maintain than small ones are. It concludes that investing tax dollars in small schools makes good economic and educational sense. Available at www.ruraledu.org/dollars_sense.pdf.

Smaller, Safer, Saner Successful Schools

Joe Nathan and Karen Febey

The authors use current research to demonstrate the effectiveness of small schools and schools that share facilities with other community agencies and organizations. Available at www.edfacilities.org/pubs/saneschools.pdf or by calling (888) 552-0624.

Rural Schools

Small Works: School Size, Poverty and Student Achievement

The Rural Schools and Community Trust

A study of four states (Georgia, Montana, Ohio and Texas) suggests that smaller schools reduce the harmful effects of poverty on student achievement and help students from poorer communities narrow the achievement gap between them and students from wealthier communities. Free. Available by e-mailing info@ruraledu.org or calling (202) 955-7177.

Why Rural Matters 2003: The Need for Every State to Take Action on Rural Education

The Rural Schools and Community Trust

A follow-up to the hugely successful 2000 publication, *Why Rural Matters 2003* is an analysis of rural education needs for each state and the urgency with which policymakers should address rural education policy. $10. Available by e-mailing info@ruraledu.org or calling (202) 955-7177.

CONNECTED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Using the Community as a Resource

Closing the Achievement Gap: Using the Environment as an Integrating Context for Learning (EIC)

State Education and Environment Roundtable

This report presents the results of a nationwide study of EIC programs; EIC is defined as focusing on community as a resource for learning. It describes the EIC framework, explores successful EIC programs, tells the story of involved educators and students programs, and analyze the implications of EIC-based education for student learning and instruction. Available at www.seer.org/pages/research.html.

Community as Text: Using the Community as a Resource for Learning in Community Schools

Coalition for Community Schools

The authors discuss four "community as text" models — service learning, academically-based community service, using the environment as an integrating context for learning and place-based education — all of which work to engage and motivate students by using the resources, challenges, assets and history of the community as part of the core curriculum. Subscribe to *New Directions Journal* for $70 at www.wiley.com/cda/product/0,,MHS,00.html.

Finding Common Ground: Service-Learning and Education Reform — A Survey of 28 Leading School Reform Models

Sarah Pearson, American Youth Policy Forum

This guide demonstrates how service-learning can support the academic school reform movement to educate students in a comprehensive way. The guide analyzes leading comprehensive school reform models with a focus on their compatibility with service-learning, and suggests ways these two initiatives can be linked together. $10. Available at www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf or by calling (202) 775-9731.

Learning in Deed: The Power of Service-Learning for American Schools

The National Commission on Service-Learning

This report synthesizes recommendations of this national commission established to bring a new level of public commitment to service-learning by developing recommendations and an action plan to make service-learning available to all K–12 students and encouraging adoption of service-learning among education leaders and policymakers. Available at www.servicelearningpartnership.org/OrderingOptions.asp.

Penn and West Philadelphia

Dale Mezzacappa

This piece describes the work of the West Philadelphia Improvement Corporation in the Philadelphia Public Schools. Free. E-mail Joanne Weeks at weeks@pobox.upenn.edu.

Place-Based Education: Learning To Be Where We Are

Greg Smith

This article discusses how place-based education can help overcome the disjuncture between school and children's lives. Subscribe to *Phi Delta Kappan* at www.pdkintl.org for Vol. 83(8): pp. 584–594.

Place-Based Education and Community Schools: Connecting Communities to Classrooms

Coalition for Community Schools

Place-based education and service-learning focus on local environments to enhance and guide student learning. They share the belief that K–12 education needs to incorporate real-life experience to use the community as a "context" for learning. Available at www.communityschools.org/newsletterv.2.12.html.

Universities and Community Schools Journal series

University of Pennsylvania's Center for Community Partnerships

This journal helps establish an international informal network of academics and practitioners working in different places and ways to increase the contributions universities make to the development and effectiveness of community schools. Free. Available at www.upenn.edu/ccp/bibliography.shtml or by calling (215) 898-5251.

Using Environment-Based Education to Advance Learning Skills and Character Development

The North American Association for Environmental Education and the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation

This report describes the efficacy of environment-based education in helping young people become lifelong learners and leaders. It also includes an annotated bibliography and resource guide. Available at www.neetf.org/pubs/EnviroEdReport.pdf.

Youth Development

Beacons and Afterschool Education: Making Literacy Links

The Fund for the City of New York, Youth Development Institute

Provides ideas and strategies for helping children and youth develop a love for learning. This manual illustrates how vital youth development program experiences are to the educational growth and development of young people. $8. Available by calling (212) 925-5675.

Community Counts: How Youth Organizations Matter for Youth Development

Milbrey McLaughlin

This study offers readers a better understanding of what effective youth-based organizations look like, what youth gain by participating, and what communities can do to cultivate and sustain more effective programs for youth. Its findings show that effective community-based organizations provide opportunities for healthy growth and development for young people. Available at www.publiceducation.org/PENreports.asp.

Community Programs to Promote Youth Development

National Research Council and Institute of Medicine

This national report affirms the power and value of youth development. It offers authoritative guidance to policymakers, practitioners, researchers and other key stakeholders on the role of youth development programs to promote the healthy youth development and well-being. Available at www.nap.edu/books/0309072751/html.

Core Competencies of Youth Workers
The Fund for the City of New York, Youth Development Institute

This report identifies the knowledge, skills and personal attributes needed for youth work. $5. Available by calling (212) 925-5675.

Helping Young People Succeed: Strengthening and Sustaining Relationships Between Schools and Youth Development Organizations
National Collaboration for Youth, Coalition for Community Schools, Institute for Educational Leadership

Based on a spring 2002 national meeting of education and youth development leaders, this report advocates re-establishing strong links between schools and communities, particularly youth development organizations. Available at www.communityschools.org/helpingyoungpeople.pdf. Single copies free by e-mailing ccs@iel.org.

Inputs for Learning Environments: Consistencies across the Education and Youth Development Research
Forum for Youth Investment

This commentary briefly discusses the expansion of the concept of learning and presents side-by-side comparisons of several key research efforts to identify the essential features of environments that foster learning and development. Available at www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/010604sclrpt/keychrt.pdf.

Intermediary Guidebook: Making and Managing Community Connections for Youth
School-to-Work Intermediary Project, Jobs for the Future and New Ways to Work

This guidebook is designed for people and organizations who are engaging in partnerships designed to promote young people's self-confidence about their abilities, increase their connections to adults and opportunities, and foster the academic and work-related competencies they need to succeed. Available at www.jff.org/jff/kc/library/0073.

Youth Development and Family Strengthening: A Study of Emerging Connections
The Fund for the City of New York, Youth Development Institute

This publication describes how youth development organizations help to strengthen families and connect their work with youth to families. Leading research and the experience of practitioners is described, along with six principles to help guide further development of this work. $10. Available by calling (212) 925-5675.

After School

After School Collaboration: When It Works — Why It Works, A Literature Review
National Collaborative for Youth

This comprehensive review of after-school collaboration offers parishioners and policymakers the latest information on "what works" to make a collaboration successful. First copy free, each additional copy $7.95. Available at www.nassembly.org.

Building and Sustaining Citywide Afterschool Initiatives: Experiences of the Cross-Cities Network Citywide Afterschool Initiatives
The National Institute on Out-of-School Time

This paper highlights the experiences of several citywide after-school initiatives with a particular focus on activities and strategies that contribute to building operational and sustainable citywide delivery of out-of-school time programs. The paper is intended to inform discussion; raise questions; and present recommendations for out-of-school-time leaders, policymakers and other stakeholders seeking to organize or better support citywide after-school initiatives. Available at www.niost.org/publications.html.

Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development
Arts Educational Partnership: Council of Chief State School Officers

This compendium has two purposes: to recommend to researchers and funders promising lines of inquiry and study of the academic and social effects of

learning in the arts and to provide designers of arts education curriculum and instruction with insights found in the research that suggest strategies for deepening the arts learning experiences that are required to achieve those effects. Available at http://aep-arts.org/cllinkspage.htm.

***Extended Learning Initiatives: Opportunities and Implementation Challenges* (2002)**
Council of Chief State School Officers

This publication describes six state-sponsored extended-learning initiatives from California, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota and Texas. Each profile contains information about major program components and background data, eligibility and application requirements, description of target population and funded extended-time projects, student outcomes and program evaluation, and lessons learned. Available at www.ccsso.org/pdfs/elireport.pdf.

Making After School Count
Mott Foundation

Making After School Count covers issues related to after-school programs and describes successful programs run by Mott Foundation grantees. Available at www.mott.org/21/publications.asp.

Multiple Choices After School: Findings from the Extended-Service Schools Initiative
Public/Private Ventures and MDRC

The Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund launched the Extended-Service Schools Initiative to support the creation of 60 after-school programs in 20 communities around the country that had adopted one of four national community school models. Available at www.ppv.org/pdffiles/multi%A1choice_ess_full.pdf or www.mdrc.org/Reports2002/ppv_multichoice/ppv_multichoice_abstract.htm.

Out-of-School Research Meets After-School Policy
Forum for Youth Investment

This policy commentary explores the impact of "scientifically based research" mandates on the after-school movement, provides expert opinions on what role this type of evaluation should play and examines reasonable expectations of after-school programs. Available at www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/comment/ostpc1.pdf.

SEA Toolkit on Supplemental Educational Services
Council of Chief State School Officers

Supplemental education services are required under No Child Left Behind for students who need additional assistance after school. This toolkit provides approval criteria, tools and advice for state education agencies to use as they approve supplemental educational service providers. Available at www.ccsso.org/pdfs/SSPToolkit.pdf.

***Survey Responses: Extended Learning & Development Programs* (2002)**
Council of Chief State School Officers

This report describes 29 schools using extended learning opportunities to improve student achievement. It presents school demographic characteristics and background data, as well as specific program information (i.e., structure and administration, goals and content, funding, community involvement, and evaluation). The school responses illustrate the diversity and range of extended learning programs offered in high-poverty schools that have been successful in improving student achievement. Available at www.ccsso.org/elo/survey.html.

Understanding School Standards: A Project Learn Publication Linking Club Programs to Academic Standards
Boys and Girls Clubs of America

Useful for all youth development professionals, this guide provides practical tips and strategies to link after-school activities to higher school standards. The guide contains a sample of core content-area standards along with suggested after-school activities that support each standard, as well as a glossary and resources section designed to help youth development professionals develop fluency in the language and context of school reform. Available at www.bgca.org/ProjectLearnSupp121301.pdf.

Youth Development Guide: Engaging Young People in After-School Programming
Community Network for Youth Development

This guide provides specific and practical advice on strengthening individual staff practices and organizational policies in after-school programs to support learning and young people's healthy development. Each chapter offers descriptions of core youth development practices, provides hands-on applications to improve practice, and offers exercises and tools to use with staff members. $35. Available at http://hsfo.ucdavis.edu/clearinghouse/catalog.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Parent Engagement

Building a Community School: A Parent's Guide
Children's Aid Society and the Coalition for Community Schools

This brochure is for concerned, active parents who believe that their school can be more and do more for children, families and the whole community. It introduces the community school approach, explains its benefits for parents and children, and offers some simple steps parents can take to begin turning their school into a community school. Available at www.communityschools.org/parentsguide.pdf.

Every Voice Counts: Holding a Shared Leadership to Make Decisions Together
Family Support America

Family Support America developed this model of the shared leadership event so that everyone involved in neighborhoods, programs and organizations can make the power shift that is at the heart of family support. Sample agendas, tracking and planning charts, tip boxes, and other tools included. $25.00 for nonmembers. Available at www.familysupportamerica.org.

Making Room at the Table: Fostering Family Involvement in the Planning and Governance of Formal Support Systems
Family Support America

Three-hour program of guided activities that families, program planners, staff, policymakers and other key players can use to develop awareness and skills they'll need to work as a team in planning services and carrying out programs. $20.63 for nonmembers. Available at http://secure.cartsvr.net/catalogs/catalog.asp?prodid=276738&showprevnext=1.

A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement
Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp

This new report summarizes 41 of the best research studies on how active parent, family and community participation impacts student achievement. It also examines effective strategies to connect schools, families and community with parent and community organizing efforts to improve schools. Available at www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf.

***Putting Parent Engagement into Action: A Practical Guide* (part of Shared Leadership Series)**
Family Support America

This book gives concrete recommendations on promoting parent leadership, along with real life stories and testimonials. $15.00 for nonmembers. Available at http://secure.cartsvr.net/catalogs/catalog.asp?prodid=1402591&showprevnext=1.

Community Engagement and Organizing

Community-Driven School Reform: Parents Making a Difference in Education
Mott Foundation

This article states that the key to community-driven school reform is that community organizing creates the social capital necessary to form equal partnerships between the community and the schools. This enables groups to break through bureaucratic paralysis and to generate public demand for policies and resources to eliminate disparities in the education system. Available at www.mott.org/publications/websites/mosaicv1n2/poverty.asp.

Dimensions of School/Community Collaboration: What It Takes to Make Collaboration Work
National Collaborative for Youth

This publication identifies the most promising practices in school/community collaborations and the challenges, strategies and practices that successful collaborations use to overcome obstacles. Available at www.nydic.org.

Education Organizing Newsletters
Center for Community Change

Across the country, a large number of grassroots community organizing groups have learned that working with parents on issues relating to their children's public schools not only results in organizational growth and power, but also in substantial changes and improvements within those schools. This series of newsletters discusses success stories from organizers in different cities, as well as a variety of results of organizing efforts. Available at www.communitychange.org/education/organizing.asp.

Family and Community Involvement Volume of *Principal* Magazine
National Association of Elementary School Principals

This magazine volume includes several articles regarding the need for family and community involvement in the education of our children. "It Takes a Whole Community" discusses how strategic alliances with local partners provide community schools with a rich and continuous source of services and support, and "How to Build Partnerships that Work" says that creating effective partnerships among schools, parents and communities isn't just a nice idea, it's a necessity. Available at www.naesp.org/comm/p0900.htm.

Just Waiting To Be Asked? A Fresh Look at Attitudes on Public Engagement
Public Agenda

This study summarizes the results of surveys of superintendents, school board members, teachers, parents and the public at large. This analysis of the attitudinal predisposition of key players shares lessons about the opportunities and obstacles that public engagement efforts may face. $10. Available at www.publicagenda.org or by calling (212) 686-6610.

Organizing for School Reform: How Communities Are Finding Their Voice and Reclaiming Their Public Schools
Institute for Education and Social Policy, New York University

This study summarizes surveys and interviews with 66 community groups that organized to improve schools. Their efforts helped to establish a stronger sense of accountability between schools and communities. Available at www.nyu.edu/iesp/publications/cip/org_schl_reform.pdf.

The Path of Most Resistance: Reflections on Lessons Learned from New Futures
Annie E. Casey Foundation

The foundation's reflection on funding and managing New Futures, an ambitious, comprehensive reform initiative. This was a five-year initiative aimed at preparing disadvantaged urban youth for successful lives as adults. Available at www.aecf.org/publications.

Principals in the Public: Engaging Community Support: Practical Resources for Public Engagement, Public Relations, and Marketing
National Association of Elementary School Principals and National School Public Relations Association

This guide provides ideas on how to bring positive media focus to your school's programs, ways to involve families who are unable to participate in traditional ways and tactics for communicating with all of the various audiences who comprise the school community. Available at www.nspra.org/cgi-bin/catalog.exe?ft=e&ef=viewdetail.htm&iid=69.

Strong Neighborhoods, Strong Schools
Cross-Cities Campaign for Urban School Reform and Research for Action

Using an action research approach, this report documents the methods used in community organizing for school reform and provides measures for evaluating their successful contributions to the improvement of public education and the strengthening of low-income communities. Available at www.crosscity.org/pdfs/StrNbrhdsStrSchls.pdf.

Governance

Building Effective Community Partnerships

Institute for Educational Leadership and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.

This toolkit provides ideas and resources to help local community initiatives build the relationships among organizations and individuals that are necessary to move a systemic change agenda. It offers case-study examples and a variety of tools communities can use to establish effective community partnerships. $10.00. Available at www.iel.org.

Changing Governance to Achieve Better Results for Children and Families

Center for the Study of Social Policy

This paper provides the rationale for establishing local governance entities. Local governance is defined as the process by which a community takes responsibility for improving results for children and families. The paper focuses on the need for developing of new forms of governance aimed at addressing existing structural and systemic problems and improving decision making and resource allocation at the local level. $7.50. Available by calling (202) 371-1565.

Creating a Community Agenda: How Governance Partnerships Can Improve Results for Children, Youth, and Families

Center for the Study of Social Policy

This document focuses on the step-by-step process of decision making regarding improving outcomes for children and families. It reviews the roles and responsibilities of governance partnerships and discusses how people involved in those partnerships can carry out their responsibilities. This paper is the first step toward developing a curriculum for people involved in governance partnerships. $7.50. Available by calling (202) 371-1565.

Developing Effective Partnerships to Support Local Education

School Communities That Work: A National Task Force on the Future of Urban Districts

An initiative of the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, this publication identifies new approaches to building partnerships between districts and organizations serving children, youth and families. Available at www.schoolcommunities.org/portfolio/effect_partnerships.html.

From Governance to Accountability: Building Relationships That Make Schools Work

Kavitha Mediratta and Norman Fruchter, Institute for Education and Social Policy for the Drum Major Institute for Public Policy

This paper argues for creating bottom-up accountability by developing mechanisms to improve the schools system's transparency and by increasing parent and community access, representation, and power in schools and districts. The report proposes a series of "performance standards" to help schools, districts and policymakers evaluate how well they are engaging their most important partners. Available at www.nyu.edu/iesp/publications/drum_major.pdf.

Joint Statement by the National League of Cities, the Learning First Alliance and the National Collaboration for Youth

National Collaboration for Youth

This statement describes the agreement between groups on education, youth development and government on critical steps communities must take to ensure success for America's children and youth. Available at www.nassembly.org.

Leading the Way to Meaningful Partnerships

By Lee Benson and Ira Harkavy

This article demonstrates how higher education organizations are an integral part of successful community-school partnerships. Available at www.principals.org/news/pl_partners0901.html.

School-Community Partnerships in Support of Student Learning: Taking a Second Look at the Governance of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program
Institute for Educational Leadership

This report sheds light on the processes of establishing, maintaining and repairing school-community partnerships and makes clear that there is a powerful connection between governance arrangements and results/accomplishments. $5. Available at www.iel.org.

STRATEGIC ORGANIZATION AND FINANCING

Strategic Organization

A Handbook for State Policy Leaders — Community Schools: Improving Student Learning/Strengthening Schools, Families, and Communities
Coalition for Community Schools

This handbook and executive summary is designed to help state leaders form vital connections between schools and communities to improve student learning. It also is useful to the work of policy leaders in cities, counties, local school districts and philanthropy. Available at www.communityschools.org/handbook.pdf.

Building Local Infrastructure for Youth Development: The Added Value of Capacity-Building Intermediary Organizations.
Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, Academy for Educational Development

This report explores what capacity-building intermediary organizations (CBIs) do and what roles they play in strengthening youth development programs, practices and policies. Profiles of eight CBIs (seven local and one statewide) are included with highlights of their organizational origins and structures and their primary functions. Available free by calling (202) 884-8267 or e-mailing pubsinfo@aed.org.

Community School Coordinator Job Descriptions
Chicago Public Schools and the Children's Aid Society

Community schools across the country employ a community school coordinator or partnership liaison to recruit, organize and manage the multiple resources and partnerships that are integrated into a community school. Here are examples of job descriptions used by the Chicago Public Schools and the Children's Aid Society in New York City. Available at www.communityschools.org/crc.html.

Crossing Boundaries: Collaboration, Coordination, and the Redefinition of Resources
Seymour Sarason and Elizabeth Lorentz

The authors show how collaboration between organizations can work, and how the pooling of resources can add up to more than the sum of its parts. They emphasize the role of networks for maximizing the use of resources, the special role and characteristics of a network coordinator, and the energy and sense of community that will result. $37. Available at www.josseybass.com/cda/product/0,,0787910694,00.html.

Financing

Finance Project

These briefs provide information for policymakers and education leaders on how to support after-school and out-of-school-time, and community school initiatives with different sources of funding ranging from local revenue to state dollars and federal Title I allocations.

- *Creating Dedicated Local Revenue Sources for Out-of-School Time Initiatives* (available at www.financeproject.org/Brief1.htm)
- *Finding Funding: A Guide to Federal Sources for Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives* (available at www.financeproject.org/ostfederalfunds.htm)
- *Maximizing Medicaid Funding to Support Health and Mental Health Services for School-Age Children & Youth* (available at www.financeproject.org/Brief5.htm)

- *Using Title I to Support Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives* (available at www.communityschools.org/title1brief.pdf)
- *Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool* (available at www.financeproject.org/ostplanning.htm)
- *Title I Supplemental Educational Services and Afterschool Programs: Opportunities and Challenges* (available at www.financeproject.org/suppsvc.pdf)
- *Using CCDF to Finance Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives* (available at www.financeproject.org/Brief7.htm)

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND RESOURCES

Education Department Offers Desktop Reference for No Child Left Behind
U.S. Department of Education

This 180-page desktop reference manual to No Child Left Behind offers a program-by-program look at the major reforms under the law. For each section of the landmark law, the manual explains the purpose of the program, what's new in the law, how the program works, key requirements, how to achieve quality, how performance is measured, and key activities and responsibilities for state education departments. Free. Available at www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/reference.html.

***Leave No Child and No Family Behind* Web Site**
National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University

This Web site assists schools, districts and state departments of education in meeting and exceeding requirements of the No Child Left Behind law. NNPS provides manuals, resources, evaluation opportunities and on-going professional development for strengthening and maintaining programs of school, family and community partnerships. Summaries are given of four new requirements: reporting to parents on their own child's test scores; changing from failing to better schools; providing supplementary services; and reporting to the public on school status, progress and trends. Available at www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/nochild.htm.

No Child Left Behind: What's in It for Parents
Anne T. Henderson for Parent Leadership Associates

This guide informs parents about what they need to know regarding the new education legislation. It discusses six major leverage points that parents and community members can use to advocate for a high-quality education for their children, along with specific steps that parents can take to ensure that their schools are complying with the new law. $15. Available by calling (859) 233-9849 or at www.plassociates.org.

No Child Left Behind Issue Brief on Data-Driven Decision-Making
Education Commission of the States

This brief is a good overview on data-driven decision making and describes how districts can support data use, including discussion of school improvement plans and allocating district resources. Available at www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/35/52/3552.pdf.

Parents Left Behind: A Study of State, Federal, and School District Implementation of No Child Left Behind
Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now

This report specifically examines the level of implementation of two parts of No Child Left Behind — the information that parent are supposed to receive about the quality of their children's teachers and the ability parents have had to get supplemental education services (tutoring) for their children. The report looks at the responsibilities and performance of the federal government along with the states and school districts. Available at www.acorn.org/acorn10/betterschools/BetterSchoolsReports/parents.

Using NCLB to Improve Student Achievement: An Action Guide for Community and Parent Leaders
Public Education Network

This action guide by the Public Education Network cuts through education jargon and explains the law's new requirements for states, districts and schools in clear terms. It is organized as an easy-to-use professional development tool for administrators and teachers and prioritizes 10 major areas in the law where the public should concentrate its action. Available at www.publiceducation.org/pdf/NCLBBook.pdf.

EDUCATION

Educational Leadership

Leadership for Student Learning Series

The School Leadership for the 21st Century Initiative, Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL)

IEL convened task forces to report on critical education issues and make recommendations for teachers, principals, school district leaders, urban school leaders and state leaders to become better leaders with the goal of improving student learning. See www.iel.org/pubs.html#21st for all reports in the Leadership for Student Learning series: *Reinventing the Principalship, Restructuring School District Leadership, Recognizing the State's Role in Public Education, Redefining the Teacher as Leader* and *Urban School Leadership — Different in Kind and Degree.*

Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do

National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)

NAESP takes a fresh look at the role of the school leader and advocates that principals begin to engage in their work differently. In the context of the academic standards movement, school leaders are thinking anew about how to define "quality " in schools and how to create and manage the environments that support it. NAESP offers six standards; the final standard clearly states that instructional leadership in schools must actively engage the community. $24.95 for nonmembers. Available at www.naesp.org.

The Will and the Way of Data Use

American Association of School Administrators

This article discusses collecting data at two distinct levels: the individual school level and the community level. At the school level, data are collected on children's school readiness, which drive local preschool programming. At the district level, data are collected regarding community child care needs, which fuel policymaking efforts with regard to the issue of school readiness. Available at www.aasa.org/publications/sa/2002_12/LaFee_Alwin.htm.

Using Data to Improve Schools: What's Working

American Association of School Administrators

This easy-to-read guide describes how to use data to drive school improvement. As educators shift their focus from simply reporting test results to using the data to improve instruction, data become essential ingredients in school improvement. Available at www.aasa.org/cas/UsingDataToImproveSchools.pdf.

Other Education Resources

***Alliance for the American High School* Web Site**

A useful resource for information on high school reform models and strategies that include community, use public engagement to foster high achievement, and promote civic and personal growth. Available at www.hsalliance.org.

***Comprehensive School Reform Step-by-Step* Web Site**

National Clearinghouse on Comprehensive School Reform (NCCSR)

NCCSR's Web site offers models of school reform that incorporate parent and community involvement and partnerships with community-based organizations. It provides valuable information about the opportunities that comprehensive school reform offers for community schools. Available at www.goodschools.gwu.edu/sbs.

Defining the Knowledge Base for Interprofessional Education

The Interprofessional Education Consortium

This report outlines the knowledge, skills and values of interprofessional education in the fields of education, health and human services with the intent of preparing professionals so that they can improve service delivery across these systems. Available at http://iccs.csumb.edu/html/community/stuart/stuart_manual1.htm.

National and Local Community School Networks

These organizations represent the 20 community school initiatives evaluated in this report and/or the networks with which the 15 schools included in this report are affiliated. For additional information on community school networks in other areas, please see www.communityschools.org.

NATIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL NETWORKS

Beacons Schools

Peter Kleinbard, Director
Fund for the City of New York,
Youth Development Institute
121 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10013
T: (212) 925-6675
E-mail: pkleinbard@fcny.org
www.fcny.org

Center for Community Partnerships: University-Assisted Community Schools West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC)

Joann Weeks, Associate Director
University of Pennsylvania, Center for Community Partnerships
133 S. 36th St., Ste. 519
Philadelphia, PA 19104
T: (215) 898-0240
F: (215) 573-1134
E-mail: weeks@pobox.upenn.edu
www.upenn.edu/ccp

Children's Aid Society Community Schools

Jane Quinn, Assistant Executive Director for Community Schools
Children's Aid Society
105 E. 22nd St., Ste. 908
New York, NY 10010
T: (212) 949-4954
F: (917) 286-1580
E-mail: janeq@childrensaidsociety.org
www.childrensaidsociety.org

Comer School Development Program

55 College St.
New Haven, CT 06511
E-mail: schooldevelopmentprogram@yale.edu
www.schooldevelopmentprogram.org

Communities In Schools, Inc.

Marilyn Smith, Executive Director
277 S. Washington St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
T: (703) 518-2590
E-mail: smithm@cisnet.org
www.cisnet.org

National Center for Community Education

Mary Gray, Associate Director
1017 Avon St.
Flint, MI 48503
T: (810) 238-0463
F: (810) 238-9211
E-mail: marygrayy@earthlink.net
www.nccenet.org

National Community Education Association

Starla Jewell-Kelley, Executive Director
3929 Old Lee Highway, Ste. 91-A
Fairfax, VA 22030
T: (703) 359-8973
F: (703) 359-0972
E-mail: Starla@ncea.com
www.ncea.com

Rural School and Community Trust

Rachel Tompkins, President
1825 K St., NW, Ste. 703
Washington, DC 20006
T: (202) 955-7177
F: (202) 955-7179
E-mail: rachel.tompkins@ruraledu.org
www.ruraledu.org

School of the 21st Century

Beth Lapin, Senior Associate
Yale University Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy
310 Prospect St.
New Haven, CT 06511
T: (203) 432-9943
F: (203) 432-9945
E-mail: beth.lapin@yale.edu
www.yale.edu/bushcenter/21C

LOCAL/STATE COMMUNITY SCHOOL NETWORKS

Achievement Plus

Maria J. Lamb, Chief Education Officer
740 York Ave.
Saint Paul, MN 55106
T: (651) 793-7367
F: (651) 793-7363
E-mail: maria.lamb@spps.org
www.achievementplus.org

Alliance Schools

Ernesto Cortés Jr., Southwest Regional Director
Texas Interfaith Education Fund
1106 Clayton Ln., Ste. 120W
Austin, TX 78723
T: (512) 459-6551
F: (512) 459-6558

Boston Excels

Anne Greenbaum, Director
The Home for Little Wanderers
271 Huntington Ave.
Boston, MA 02115
T: (617) 927-0613
F: (617) 428-0441
E-mail: agreenb@thehome.org
www.thehome.org

Bridges to Success

United Way of Central Indiana
Debbie Zipes, Director
3901 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46240
T: (317) 921-1283
F: (317) 921-1355
E-mail: Zipes@uwci.org
www.uwci.org

California Center for Community School Partnerships

Healthy Start Field Office
Lisa Villarreal, Executive Director
University of California, Davis
Education/CRESS Center
Davis, CA 95616
T: (530) 754-4319
F: (530) 752-3754
E-mail: lrvillarreal@ucdavis.edu
ccc-sp.ucdavis.edu
hsfo.ucdavis.edu

Campaign to Expand Community Schools in Chicago

Elizabeth F. Swanson, Director of Community Initiatives
Office of After School Programs
Chicago Public Schools
125 S. Clark St., 5th Floor
Chicago, IL 60603
T: (773) 553-1529
F: (773) 553-3595
E-mail: efswanson@cps.k12.il.us

Chicago Coalition for Community Schools

Michelle Scheidt, Project Director
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3029 E. 91st St.
Chicago, IL 60617
T: (773) 371-2924
F: (773) 221-4729
E-mail: scheidtm@metrofamily.org

Children's Hunger Alliance

William J. Dolan, Chief Executive Officer
181 E. Livingston Ave.
Columbus, OH 43215
T: (614) 341-7700, ext. 211
F: (614) 341-7701
E-mail: dolan@childrenshungeralliance.org
www.childrenshungeralliance

Dallas Youth and Family Centers Program

Jenni Jennings, Executive Director
P.O. Box 4967
Dallas, TX 75208
T: (972) 581-4789
E-mail: jjennings@dallasisd.org
www.dallasisd.org

Hamilton County Families and Children First Council

Patricia Eber, Executive Director
125 E. Court St., Ste. 350
Cincinnati, OH 45202
T: (513) 946-4990
F: (513) 632-6527
E-mail: patty.eber@hamilton-co.org
www.hamilton-co.org/hcfcfc

Illinois Project Success Initiative

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921 W. Van Buren, Ste. 210
Chicago, IL 60607
T: (312) 996-4463
E-mail: a-adan@uiuc.edu

Kay Mulhall, Program Evaluator
Center for Prevention Research and Development
University of Illinois
510 Devonshire Dr.
Champaign, IL 61820
T: (217) 333-3231
E-mail: kemulhal@uiuc.edu

Kentucky Office of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers

Robert Goodlett, Ed. D., Executive Director
Office of Family Resource and Youth Services Center
Cabinet for Families and Children
275 E. Main, 3C-G
Frankfort, KY 40621
T: (502) 564-4986
F: (502) 564-6108
E-mail: sandy.goodlett@mail.state.ky.us
http://cfc.state.ky.us/frysc

LA's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow)

Carla Sanger, President and CEO
Office of the Mayor
200 N. Spring St., M-120
Los Angeles, CA 90012
T: (213) 978-0801
F: (213) 978-0800
E-mail: csanger@mayor.lacity.org
www.lasbest.org

Lincoln Community Learning Centers Initiative

Cathie Petsch, Coordinator
Lea Ann Johnson, Coordinator
21st Century Community Learning Centers
P.O. Box 82889
Lincoln, NE 68508
T: (402) 436-1965
F: (402) 441-4883
E-mail: ljohns2@lps.org or cpetsch@lps.org
www.lincolnclc.org

Minneapolis Beacons/21st Century Learning Centers Network

Doris Baylor, Director
Minneapolis Beacons Project
YMCA of Metropolitan Minneapolis
30 S. Ninth St.
Minneapolis, MN 55402
T: (612) 371-8745
E-mail: Dbaylor@YMCAmpls.org
www.ymcampls.org

New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program

Kay Reiss, Director
New Jersey Department of Human Services
Office of Special Initiatives
222 S. Warren St., P.O. Box 700
Trenton, NJ 08625
T: (609) 292-0908
F: (609) 292-4800
E-mail: kay.reiss@dhs.state.nj.us
www.state.nj.us/humanservices

Polk Bros. Foundation (Full Service School Initiative)

Suzanne Doornbos Kerbow, Associate Director
20 W. Kinzie St., Ste. 1110
Chicago, IL 60610
T: (312) 527-4684
F: (312) 527-4681
E-mail: suzanne@polkbrosfdn.org
www.polkbrosfdn.org

Readiness to Learn Program

Ron Hertel, Program Supervisor
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504
T: (360) 725-6049
F: (360) 664-3575
E-mail: rhertel@ospi.wednet.edu
www.k12.wa.us/learnteachsupp/readtolearn

Schools Uniting Neighborhoods

Dianne Iverson, Director
Office of School and Community Partnerships
421 SW Sixth Ave., Ste. 200
Portland, OR 97204
T: (503) 988-4786
F: (503) 988-3710
E-mail: dianne.d.iverson@co.multnomah.or.us
www.sunschools.org

Coalition for Community Schools Partners

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/ COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Center for Community Change
- Development Training Institute
- National Community Building Network
- National Congress for Community Economic Development
- National Council of La Raza
- National Neighborhood Coalition
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- National Urban League
- Police Executive Research Forum
- The Harwood Institute

EDUCATION

- American Association for Higher Education
- American Association of School Administrators
- American Federation of Teachers
- American School Counselor Association
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- Council of the Great City Schools
- Developmental Studies Center
- Learning First Alliance
- National Association for Bilingual Education
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of School Psychologists
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Association of State Boards of Education
- National Association of State Directors of Special Education
- National Education Association
- National PTA
- National School Boards Association
- Pacific Oaks College (CA)

FAMILY SUPPORT/HUMAN SERVICES

- Alliance for Children and Families
- American Public Human Services Association
- CASEL (Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning) – University of Illinois at Chicago
- Child Welfare League of America
- The Educational Alliance
- Family Support America
- National Center for Family Literacy
- United Way of America

GOVERNMENT

Local and State Government

- National Association of Counties
- National Conference of State Legislatures*
- National Governors Association*
- National League of Cities

Federal Government

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Learn and Serve America
- 21st Century Learning Centers

HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

- American Public Health Association
- American School Health Association
- National Assembly on School-Based Health Care
- National Mental Health Association
- Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
- UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools

* Interested parties

LOCAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL NETWORKS

- Achievement Plus Community Learning Centers (St. Paul, MN)
- Alliance for Families & Children (Hennepin County, MN)
- Baltimore Coalition for Community Schools (MD)
- Bates College/Lewiston Public Schools (ME)
- Birmingham Public Schools (AL)
- Boston Excels (MA)
- Boston Full Service Schools Roundtable (MA)
- Bridges to Success, United Way of Central Indiana (Indianapolis, IN)
- Bridges to the Future, United Way of Genesse County (Flint, MI)
- Bridges to Success, United Way of Greater Greensboro (Greensboro, NC)
- Bridges to Success, United Way of Greater High Point (High Point, NC)
- Chatham-Savannah Youth Futures Authority (GA)
- Chelsea Community Schools (MA)
- Chicago Coalition for Community Schools (IL)
- Chicago Public Schools, The Campaign to Expand Community Schools in Chicago (IL)
- Community Agencies Corporation of New Jersey
- Community College of Aurora/Aurora Public Schools (CO)
- Community-School Connections (NY)
- Community Schools Rhode Island
- Jacksonville Children's Commission (FL)
- KidsCAN! — Mesa United Way (AZ)
- Lincoln Community Learning Centers Initiative (NE)
- Linkages to Learning (Montgomery County, MD)
- Local Investment Commission (Kansas City, MO)
- Minneapolis Beacons Project (MN)
- New Paradigm Partners (Turtle Lake, WI)
- New Vision for Public Schools (NY)
- Project Success (IL)
- Rockland 21st Century Collaborative for Children and Youth (NY)
- School Linked Services, Inc. (Kansas City, KS)
- SCOPE (Central Falls, RI)
- St. Louis Park Schools (MN)
- St. Louis Public Schools, Office of Community Education (MO)
- Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (Portland, OR)
- United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania/First Doors to the Future (Philadelphia, PA)
- University of Alabama-Birmingham/Birmingham Public Schools
- University of Dayton/Dayton Public Schools (OH)
- University of Denver/Denver Public Schools (CO)
- University of Kentucky/Lexington Public Schools
- University of New Mexico/United South Broadway Corp/Albuquerque Public Schools
- University of Rhode Island/Pawtucket Public
- West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (PA)

NATIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL NETWORKS

- Beacon Schools Youth Development Institute at the Fund for the City of New York
- Center for Community School Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania
- Children's Aid Society
- Collaborative for Integrated School Services, Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Communities In Schools
- National Community Education Association
- Schools of the 21st Century, Bush Center-Yale University

POLICY, TRAINING AND ADVOCACY

- American Youth Policy Forum
- Children's Defense Fund
- Cross Cities Campaign for Urban School Reform
- Joy Dryfoos, Independent Researcher
- Education Development Center
- Family Friendly Schools (VA)
- The Finance Project
- Foundations, Inc.
- Institute for Responsive Education

- Institute for Social and Education Policy, New York University
- National Center for Community Education
- National Center for Schools and Communities, Fordham University
- National Child Labor Committee
- National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education
- National Youth Employment Coalition
- Parents United for Child Care (Boston, MA)
- Public Education Network
- RMC Research
- The Rural School and Community Trust

PHILANTHROPY

- The After School Corporation
- Carnegie Corporation
- Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
- Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
- KnowledgeWorks Foundation
- Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation
- Polk Bros. Foundation
- Rose Community Foundation
- Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds

SCHOOL FACILITIES PLANNING

- Concordia, LLC
- National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities
- New Schools/Better Neighborhoods
- Smart Growth America
- 21st Century School Fund

STATE ENTITIES

- California Department of Education
- California Healthy Start Field Office, California Center for Community-School Partnerships
- Child and Family Policy Center (IA)
- Children First (OH)
- Colorado Foundation for Families & Children
- Community Schools (RI)
- Education Leadership Beyond Excellence (NC)
- Foundation Consortium (CA)
- Illinois Community School Partnership/Voices for Illinois Children
- Nebraska Children and Families Foundation
- New Jersey School Based Youth Services/Department of Human Services
- Office of Family Resource and Youth Services Center (KY)
- Ohio Department of Education
- State Education and Environment Roundtable
- Tennessee Consortium for Full-Service Schools
- Washington State Readiness-to-Learn Initiative

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

- Academy for Educational Development
- AED Center for Youth Development and Policy Research
- After School Resource Network
- America's Promise
- Association of New York State Youth Bureaus
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of America
- Boys and Girls Clubs of America
- California Afterschool Partnership /Center for Collaborative Solutions
- Camp Fire USA
- Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth
- Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund
- Forum on Youth Investment
- National Collaboration for Youth
- National Institute for Out-of-School Time
- National School-Age Care Alliance
- Partnership for After-School Education
- YMCA of the USA

Coalition for Community Schools

Strengthening schools, families & communities

Coalition for Community Schools
c/o Institute for Educational Leadership
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 310
Washington, DC 20036
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MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

Research and Practice in Community Schools

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Coalition for Community Schools

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ABOUT THE COALITION FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

An alliance of more than 160 national, state and local organizations, the Coalition represents community development and community building; education; family support and human services; government; health and mental health services; policy, training and advocacy; philanthropy; and school facilities planning and youth development organizations, as well as local, state and national networks of community schools.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Coalition's mission is to mobilize the assets of schools, families and communities to create a united movement for community schools. Community schools strengthen schools, families and communities to improve student learning.

***Making the Difference* and this executive summary were written by Martin J. Blank, Atelia Melaville and Bela P. Shah**

COALITION FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS STAFF

Martin J. Blank, Staff Director
Sheri Deboe Johnson, Partnerships Manager
Bela P. Shah, Program Associate
Noelani Schneider, Program Assistant
The Coalition for Community Schools is staffed by the Institute for Educational Leadership.

ORDERING INFORMATION

Additional copies of this executive summary are available free. The full report and additional resource materials are available to download free of charge at www.communityschools.org. Single copies of the full report are available for $12 prepaid; $2 will be added for shipping and handling if billing is requested. All orders must be received in writing by fax, e-mail or mail. Bulk orders are available at a reduced rate.

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Community Schools Improve Outcomes for Students, Families, Schools and Communities

✦ ✦ ✦

Universal education is a valued tradition in America, and with good reason — a democracy rises and falls on the education of its children. Universal, however, does not necessarily mean equal or even adequate.

In recent decades, educators, policymakers and others have come to understand that the real question is not how to provide all children with schooling, but how to create the conditions that enable every child to succeed. Today's federal mandate, set forth in the No Child Left Behind Act, gives new urgency to this question — just as shrinking budgets and increasing demands for accountability challenge schools to do more with less.

Many educators and policymakers believe that the community schools approach can lead us to the answer. A community school is a place as well as a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, services, supports and opportunities leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Schools become centers of the community and are open to everyone — all day, every day, evenings and weekends. By sharing expertise and resources, schools and communities act in concert to educate children; schools are not left to work alone.

Research confirms what experience has long suggested: Community schools work. **Evaluations examined the impact of 20 community school initiatives across America, focusing in particular on outcomes that directly affect student learning. Although not all evaluations looked at every outcome, their collective results clearly show that community schools make the difference for students in four important ways:**

- **Community schools improve student learning.** By addressing the needs of the whole child — physical, social and emotional as well as academic — community schools create environments that fulfill all the necessary conditions for learning. As a result, community school students show significant and widely evident gains in academic outcomes and in essential areas of nonacademic development.

  Fifteen of the 20 initiatives in this study reported improvement in student academic achievement, as measured by improved grades in school courses and scores in proficiency testing

  In addition, more than half of the evaluations looked for and found evidence of positive development as measured by a variety of indicators, including improved attendance (eight initiatives), reduced behavior or discipline problems (five initiatives), greater compliance with school assignments and rules (three initiatives), increased access to physical and mental health services (five initiatives), greater contact with supportive adults (three initiatives), and improvements in personal/family situations (three initiatives).

- **Community schools promote family engagement with students and schools.** Families have access to services and opportunities — including chances to participate as both

leaders and learners — that make them effective partners in their children's education.

More than half of the evaluations measured and reported specific benefits to families, such as improvements in communication with schools and teachers (four initiatives), family stability and ability to provide for children's basic needs (three initiatives), parents' ability to meet workplace obligations (two initiatives), confidence in their ability to teach their children (two initiatives), and attendance at school meetings (two initiatives).

- **Community schools help schools function more effectively.** Because parents and partners work together with the school staff to support learning, community schools positively influence overall school operations.

  Almost three-quarters of the evaluations examined the school's overall environment, identifying improved outcomes in many areas. For example, principals and staff affirmed the importance of on-site services (five initiatives), more parents participated in their children's learning (four initiatives), there was nonpartisan support for public education and access to resources through community partnerships (four initiatives), and services were well-integrated into the daily operation of schools (two initiatives). In the classroom, evaluators found increased emphasis on creative, project-based learning and more innovations in teaching and curriculum (two initiatives). School environments were more cheerful and were more likely to be perceived as safe (two initiatives).

- **Community schools add vitality to communities.** When the community is engaged with the school, resources and benefits flow both ways. Community partners provide on-site supports and opportunities for students, their families and their neighbors. In turn, the school maintains an active presence as a community hub, providing opportunities for family involvement, tapping into the community as a resource for learning and serving as a center for community problem solving.

  Eleven evaluations that looked at this aspect suggest that community schools play a powerful role in community building. Evaluators noted a variety of improved outcomes, including improved community knowledge of and perception of the community school initiative (seven initiatives); increased use of school buildings, awareness of community agencies and access to facilities previously unknown or unaffordable (seven initiatives); improved security and safety in the surrounding area (two initiatives); and strengthened community pride and engagement in the school (two initiatives).

More information about the initiatives, evaluations, and research methodology and limitations can be found in the full *Making the Difference* report or on the Coalition for Community Schools Web site, www.communityschools.org.

Overall, evaluation of these 20 community school models and approaches provides some important lessons for future efforts:

Lesson #1: Quality Counts. The quality of community school initiatives has a significant impact on outcomes.

Lesson #2: Attendance Matters. Higher attendance in community schools contributes to improved achievement. Children in community schools want to come to school, and so they learn more.

Lesson #3: Everyone Benefits — the Neediest Most of All. Students with the greatest need — those most likely to be in low-performing schools — benefit the most from the community school environment. Community schools that reach out to low-income and underachieving students can begin to narrow the performance gap among student groups and across schools.

The Community School Vision

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For more than 100 years, community schools have promoted a simple and fundamental value: School, community and family are inextricably joined and must work closely together for the benefit of every child.

Walk into a community school and you immediately recognize that it's a special place. That's because it is more than a school — it also is a set of deliberate partnerships that provide the supports and opportunities that are important to students, families and the surrounding community. Community partners can include health and social service agencies, family support groups, institutions of higher education, youth development organizations, government, community groups, or others — but they all are organized around a common goal: To create the conditions necessary for all children to learn at their best.

If you visit a community school when classes are in session, you'll notice that students and their teachers are actively engaged in learning. Because children can receive on-site services important to their mental and physical well-being, they arrive in class alert and ready to learn. Teachers draw on the community — its resources and its challenges — to create rich learning experiences that excite students and align with curriculum and standards.

Parents and other family members are enthusiastic partners in their children's learning. You may find them volunteering in the classrooms, attending parent-teacher conferences or learning how to better support their child's education at home. They participate in school leadership meetings where they help make decisions about how the community school operates.

If you visit outside of traditional school hours, you'll notice something else unusual: The school continues to be busy and alive with learning, all day, every day. Children and youth participate in after-school academic and enrichment programs, receive tutoring or mentoring, and take part in community service-learning opportunities — all connected to the school day. Adults brush up on parenting and job skills, learn English, receive family counseling or come together to address community problems.

Now, step outside the building and see how it lights up the community — both literally and in spirit. Because the building is in constant use, the neighborhood is more active and more likely to be safe. Because children and families are succeeding, the community shares an understandable pride.

Our vision of community schools is not just a pretty picture. It already is making the difference in hundreds of cities and towns across America.

Why Community Schools Do a Better Job

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Unlike traditional public schools, community schools link school and community resources as an integral part of their design and operation. Consequently, community schools have three major advantages that schools acting alone do not.

- **They garner additional resources for the school and reduce demands on school staff.** Community schools reach outside their walls to leverage services and programs that help meet a range of needs that affect student learning — including family mobility, violence, unsupervised out-of-school time and other issues that have become facts of life for too many children in today's society. This approach gives principals and teachers more time to concentrate on their core mission: Improving student learning.

- **They provide learning opportunities that develop both academic and nonacademic competencies.** Community schools support the intellectual, physical, psychoemotional and social development of young people and understand that assets in one area reinforce development in another. Abundant opportunities for learning and exploration in school, after school and in the community help students mature in all areas.

- **They offer young people, their families and community residents opportunities to build social capital.** Social capital connects students to people and information that can help them solve problems and meet their goals. Community schools enable all students to forge networks and social skills through mentoring relationships with caring adults, school-to-work learning, community service and other experiences, while providing parents and other adults with similar opportunities to learn and assume leadership roles.

As a result of these advantages, community schools are in a unique position to fulfill five **conditions for learning** that the Coalition for Community Schools has identified as necessary for every child to succeed, based on an analysis of recent literature. Here is a summary of the conditions and the research on which they are based.

Condition #1: The school has a core instructional program with qualified teachers, a challenging curriculum, and high standards and expectations for students.

The research shows that:

- Competent and prepared teachers strongly affect student achievement.

- A rich curriculum with quality content and effective instruction challenges children to meet high standards and has a direct impact on improved student achievement.

- High-performing schools are guided by strong leadership and clear vision and create an atmosphere of trust among staff and parents.

- Small schools and class sizes contribute significantly to improved academic achievement and long-term educational outcomes, especially for minority, inner-city and low-income children.

Condition #2: Students are motivated and engaged in learning — both in school and in community settings, during and after school.

The research shows that:

- Brain functioning from infancy throughout the school years is most efficient when learning is active and concrete.
- Students learn best when they are personally interested, when they are actively involved and when they consider the content important.
- Effective learning occurs when schools, after-school programs and other organizations use the resources and challenges of the community as a living textbook for learning.
- Enrichment activities that enhance rather than replicate classroom work help students acquire skills and competencies that contribute to classroom success.

Condition #3: The basic physical, mental and emotional health needs of young people and their families are recognized and addressed.

The research shows that:

- Comprehensive school-based health care helps improve attendance, behavior and grades.
- In addition to promoting students' self-confidence, mental health services contribute to better school performance and an improved school climate.
- Proper nutrition and physical exercise have a significant impact on student academic outcomes and participation in school as well as on psychosocial functioning.

Condition #4: There is mutual respect and effective collaboration among parents, families and school staff.

The research shows that:

- Active parent and family engagement strongly predicts school success.
- Efforts to build respectful, cooperative relationships among parents, families, teachers and school administrators help family members feel more capable of contributing to their child's education and connected to their child's school.
- When families are supported in their parenting role, their involvement in their children's learning increases and student performance is strengthened.
- Consistent parental involvement at home and at school — at every grade level and throughout the year — is important for students' academic success and future aspirations.

Condition #5: Community engagement, together with school efforts, promote a school climate that is safe, supportive and respectful and that connects students to a broader learning community.

The research shows that:

- Young people who feel safe, accepted and connected to their schools are more likely to stay in school, develop social skills and do well academically.
- Young people, teachers and other adults benefit from caring relationships, opportunities for participation and an atmosphere of high expectations.
- Community organizing and community engagement build support for school reform, improve school climate and set the stage for academic achievement.
- The condition of school buildings has a significant impact on both school climate and student achievement.

Learn more about the specific studies that support each of the five conditions for learning in the full *Making the Difference* report or on the Coalition for Community Schools' Web site, www.communityschools.org.

Bringing the Community School Vision Home: An Action Agenda

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Four elements are vital to the success of community schools:

- **A motivating vision** that mobilizes school and community, moves schools and their partners toward shared goals, guides their day-to-day relationships, and encourages accountability.
- **Connected learning experiences** linking classrooms and the real world that are aligned with learning standards, communicated and planned with partners, and focused on the conditions for learning.
- **Community partnerships** that bring together a range of assets and perspectives, focus on the shared vision and results, and provide for continuous learning among partners.
- **Strategic organization and financing** that support effective working relationships, a community schools coordinator, flexible funding and a willingness to share resources.

Action Steps

These action steps, based on the four vital elements, can help a diverse group of community and school leaders develop a community schools strategy. Action steps for leaders of particular institutions, e.g., principals, mayors and heads of nonprofit agencies, are available at www.community.org.

1. A Motivating Vision

- **Engage the community.** Involve stakeholders at both the school and district levels, including local governments and private funders, together with young people, parents, families and community residents to create a shared vision about what is needed in their school and community.
- **Use data to define desired results and drive decision-making.** In addition to statistical data, consider academic performance and related accountability requirements, as well as other factors that influence teaching and learning, such as attendance; student social, emotional and physical well-being; family well-being and involvement; and local demographics and socioeconomic issues.
- **Keep schools open before and after the regular school day and on weekends all year long.** This defining characteristic of a community school makes it clear that school buildings belong to the community.
- **Build and rehabilitate school buildings as community schools.** Bring stakeholders together to plan new buildings not just as schools, but as centers of support for students, families and community life. Rehabilitate older schools that already serve a central community function.
- **Build small schools or reconfigure existing schools to provide more effective learning communities.** Research proves that students in smaller schools perform better than their peers in larger classes or schools.

2. Connected Learning Experiences

- **Incorporate the community into the curriculum as an explicit resource for learning and improved student achievement.** Community-based learning opportunities such as service-learning, place-based education, school-to-work programs and environmental education can easily be aligned to learning standards.

- **Provide teachers and principals with professional development to enhance their ability to use the community as a learning resource.** Institutions of higher learning and school districts should focus their professional development efforts on this area.

- **Integrate in-school and after-school learning experiences.** Partner with youth development groups to offer enriching programs designed to help students achieve at high standards as well as develop life skills.

- **Draw on youth development resources and share expertise.** Encourage dialogue among educators and youth development professionals to help them understand each other's strategies and methods and focus on agreed-upon standards and competencies.

3. Community Partnerships

- **Create broad-based, local coalitions to advance, develop and sustain community schools.** Bring stakeholders together to create permanent forums to develop and promote a community school vision, mobilize resources, ensure accountability for results, keep the community informed, nurture partnerships and relationships, and build the capacity to sustain the effort.

- **Create ongoing, site-based planning and decision-making teams.** Bring families and residents, students, school staff, and community partners onto new or existing teams to review data, assess current programs, identify gaps, mobilize community resources and monitor progress toward results.

- **Engage students, parents, families and residents.** Empower parents to be strong advocates and role models for their children's learning and to participate in school activities and governance.

- **Focus all partners on creating the conditions for learning.** Ask partners to demonstrate how their services would contribute to fulfilling these conditions.

- **Build sustainable partnerships.** Nurture long-term, committed relationships between schools and community partners that can make it easier to access funding and build an environment of mutual support and trust.

- **Develop knowledge and understanding among partners and across disciplines.** Use site visits, tours, professional development and other opportunities to help school staff and partners understand each other's expertise, policies, philosophies and financial constraints.

- **Create interprofessional learning opportunities in higher education.** Encourage colleges and universities to offer preservice and in-service professional development opportunities across such fields as education, public health, mental health, social services, early childhood and youth development.

4. Organization and Financing

- **Create community school coordinator positions.** A community school coordinator mobilizes and integrates school and community resources, improves the impact of these resources on student learning, and frees up the time of principals and teachers.

- **Identify the lead partner for a community school with great care.** There is a growing trend toward having a community organization serve as the lead partner for a community school. This lead organization employs the community school coordinator and mobilizes and integrates the resources of the community into the school. In some places, the school itself will be better equipped to provide the necessary leadership and coordination. Be clear about the mission of the community school and review the assets of the school and potential partners before selecting an organizational approach.

- **Organize school district funding streams to support a community schools strategy**. This does not have to involve more money, just some planning and creative thinking. For example, bring together public and private funding streams now available through the central office (after-school activities, physical and mental health services, violence prevention, etc.) at the school site to achieve the desired results.
- **Modify policies governing other public funding streams to support community schools.** Local, state and federal governments can support a community schools approach by defining common planning requirements across agencies, pooling funds and requiring grantees to demonstrate how proposed services will help fulfill the conditions for learning.
- **Organize private funding streams to support community schools.** Funds from private-sector organizations such as the United Way, community foundations and businesses can be coordinated into a community schools strategy.
- **Develop joint financing strategies for school facilities.** School districts, local governments and community agencies can jointly finance school facilities that incorporate libraries, recreation centers, health facilities, youth centers and other facilities.
- **Work together for increased funding.** Advocate for adequate, stable financing for individual programs and services.
- **Create technical assistance capacity to support the development of community schools.** Encourage policymakers to support coordinated technical assistance approaches that build long-term relationships among schools and their community partners, rather than short-term, categorical programs. Using local intermediary organizations is an important approach to providing technical assistance to support community schools.

Public Support for Community Schools

A scientific poll of Ohio citizens by the KnowledgeWorks Foundation illustrates public support for many aspects of the Coalition for Community School's vision.

Services and Opportunities in Schools

- 91% favor comprehensive after-school programs.
- 84% favor community member use of school facilities after school hours.
- 62% favor locating community social services for children on school grounds.
- 65% favor locating community programs for adults on school grounds.

School Facilities Planning and Use

- 70% of Ohioans believe that the general public should be invited to participate in the design and planning of their community's new school facilities.
- 65% believe city and school district dollars should be combined to build recreation and general public use facilities.

Citizen Involvement in Education

- 72% of Ohioans believe local public schools will not continue to improve unless citizens get involved.
- 71% believe public school officials are interested in the community's hopes and dreams for its schools.

Source: KnowledgeWorks Foundation, 2003.

Community Schools Make the Difference

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Community schools across America are improving student learning and strengthening families and communities in a variety of measurable ways.

Howe Elementary School (Green Bay, WI): 61% of third graders now perform at proficient or advanced levels in state reading tests, up from just 40% in 1997.

Marquette Elementary School (Chicago): Strong family support helped cut the student mobility rate from 41% to 22% between 1995 and 2000, despite a student poverty rate of 96%. Reading improvement exceeded the citywide average.

East Hartford High School (East Hartford, CT): The dropout rate decreased from 22% to less than 2% annually over the last six years. Eighty percent of students now go on to two- or four-year colleges.

Northeast Elementary School (Ankeny, IA): Access to services by low-income mothers increased tenfold when a WIC federal nutrition program benefits office was added to other services available to students and their families.

Elliott Elementary School (Lincoln, NE): Teachers gained 15 to 45 minutes of instructional time per day thanks to classroom management techniques shared by staff of a partnering YMCA. Referrals of disruptive students to the principal's office decreased 80% in one year.

Parkway Heights Middle School (South San Francisco, CA): 71% of parents report spending more time with their children enrolled in Parkway's Families on Track (FOT) community school program.

Carson High School (Carson, CA): Suspensions were cut in half, from a rate of 10% in 1998 to 4.7% in 2000.

James Otis Elementary School (Boston): Parents who are adult literacy students also take leadership roles within the school as volunteers or paid staff. In 2000, the school led all other Boston schools in improvement on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Systems test.

St. Paul High School (St. Paul, VA): 94% percent of students graduate. Nearly 90% meet state reading and writing requirements in core areas, and more than 90% pass state exams in biology and geometry.

Francis Scott Key Elementary School #103 (Indianapolis): 100% of kindergartners and fifth graders received their immunization shots and were ready to start school on time in 2001. Almost three-quarters (73.2%) of third graders passed state assessments tests in 2001, up from 29% three years earlier.

Pinelands Regional Middle and High Schools (Tuckerton, NJ): Pregnancy rates decreased among young teens from about 20 each year in 1991 to approximately three each year in 2001.

East Elementary School (Kings Mountain, NC): 92% of students test at grade level, up from 45% to 50% before East became a community school in 1992.

North Middle School (Aurora, CO): The Student Support Team has successfully helped 60% to 70% of troubled students by providing services to help students cope or finding a more appropriate placement.

Webster Open Magnet School (Minneapolis): 72% of students in the Beacons program have a 95% or higher attendance rate compared to 55.5% for non-Beacons students.

Woodmere Elementary School (Portland, OR): Scores on state benchmarks in third and fifth grade math and reading increased by up to 29 percentage points in the two years that the Schools Uniting Neighborhoods initiative has been in place.

Coalition for Community Schools

Strengthening schools, families & communities

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Mission Statement

The Coalition's mission is to mobilize the assets of schools, families and communities to create a united movement for community schools. Community schools strengthen schools, families and communities to improve student learning. (See Appendix E for a full list of partner organizations.)

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